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MEMOIRS

OF

André Franconi
COUNT MIOT DE MELITO,

=
MINISTER, AMBASSADOR, COUNCILLOR OF STATE,
AND MEMBER OF THE INSTITUTE OF FRANCE, BETWEEN THE YEARS
1788 AND 1815.

EDITED BY

GENERAL FLEISCHMANN.



From the French by

MRS. CASHEL HOEY AND MR. JOHN LILLIE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PREFACE BY THE EDITOR.

MY purpose in placing before the public the recollections of Count Miot, my father-in-law, as a contribution to the large number of works which treat of the Great French Revolution and the events of the early years of the nineteenth century, is to aid writers who desire to throw a new light upon the history of those times. I believe that no materials supplied by contemporaries can be superfluous for the accurate and sufficient representation of all that was memorable, great and terrible in that epoch, and for a true estimate of the influence which it has exercised and still exercises upon the destinies of mankind.

Count Miot passed through a great revolution, but his recollections of it were untinged by personal regret. He had nothing to disguise or to excuse. It was for many years his constant habit to write down every evening all that he had learned or observed during the day. These notes of the events in which he was nearly concerned, contain

important details, for the most part unknown, and place the origin of those events in a clear and accurate light. In arranging them to meet the eyes of the public I have thought it advisable to suppress all that possesses interest for the family of Count Miot only, but I have scrupulously refrained from adding anything that might affect the nature of the impressions which were produced by the events on the mind of the author. This book must not therefore be confounded with the fabricated Memoirs so profusely offered to the public within the last thirty years; works not indeed without merit, and in many instances written with ability, but in which their reputed authors have little share.

The readers of his Memoirs will probably agree with or differ from Count Miot's views and judgment of men and things, according to their own opinions, likes and dislikes; but they cannot fail to close the book with sentiments of esteem and regard for its author; as a good man, and one who sincerely loved his country and mankind.

GENERAL FLEISCHMANN.

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MEMOIRS OF

COUNT MIOT DE MELITO.

CHAPTER I.

The Author enters upon his career—The training-camp at Saint-Omer—Comte de Guibert—The effect produced upon the troops by an ill-timed attempt to introduce the Prussian system of military organisation—The camp is abruptly broken up—The changed aspect of the Court of Versailles at the close of the year 1783—The various parties at the Court—The deputies of the Tiers État are ill-received—Opening of the States-General—Establishment of the National Guard—The Court forms projects hostile to the National Assembly—The banquet of the Body Guard—Intention of the Court to leave Versailles—Events of the 5th and 6th of October—The King and the Royal Family are taken to Paris.

I WAS born at Versailles in 1762, and my parents destined me from an early age to be employed in the military administration. With the exception of a few excursions, for purposes of instruction, to Havre, Metz, Holland, and the Low Countries, I passed my first years of youthful manhood in the War Office, in which my father was one of the chief

clerks. In 1788 I was appointed "Commissary of War," and sent to one of the military divisions which had recently been established. This, which used to be called "the model division," was commanded by Lieutenant-General the Duc de Guines. The celebrated Comte de Guibert, the Marquis de Lambert, both members of the Council of War formed under the Ministry of M. de Brienne, and M. Blanchard, one of the most eminent of the "organising commissaries," were included in it. The general officers of the "model division" were the originators of a completely novel system of military administration, which, however, found no favour with the troops. Their plan was to train the French army in the Prussian discipline and tactics, and the national pride repelled those innovations, which were undoubtedly dangerous at a moment when the public mind was seriously disturbed by other proceedings on the part of the Brienne Ministry. The effects of the ferment produced by these combined causes were destined to manifest themselves in the course of the ensuing year.

Meanwhile, two training-camps were established; one at Saint-Omer, under the command of the Prince de Condé, the other at Metz, under that of Marshal de Broglie. I was employed at the former, which included the troops of the division in which I served. I arrived in September 1788 at the camp, which

was situated on a wide heath, at a little distance from the town. About 30,000 men were assembled there; among that number were included the Swiss regiments of Salis-Sansade and Diesbach. They had already made great progress in the study of the new manœuvres; and these foreigners, who adapted themselves to the novel *régime* more readily than Frenchmen could, were much admired and highly favoured by the admirers of the Prussian discipline who composed the staff. Being perpetually quoted as an example to all the other corps, these regiments excited jealousy and aversion rather than emulation, and it may safely be affirmed that the first seeds of the insubordination afterwards exhibited by the French army were sown by attempts which were both imprudent and opposed to the national character.

The discontent excited by these innovations found expression in the camp in the usual way, by means of jests and songs directed against the "jobbers" (*faiseurs*), as they were called, and especially against M. de Guibert, who, being much superior in talent and administrative ability to his colleagues in the Council of War, and therefore supposed to be the most influential member of it, was a butt for every epigram. The malcontents went farther than epigrams; conspiracies to insult the Count publicly were formed among the young officers; the ma-

nœuvres directed by him were purposely ill-executed, and made to fail; his title, and even his claim to the status of a gentleman were disputed. In short, no means of casting ridicule upon him was left untried, and the unworthy manner in which he was treated at the assembly of the nobles of his province for the election to the States-General was due to the jealousy inspired by his remarkable ability, and the decided repugnance with which the changes he had endeavoured to introduce were regarded.

In addition to all this, in spite of the constant occupations and the perpetual movement of the camps, men's minds were not uninfluenced by what was happening just then at Versailles. The enterprises of the Brienne Ministry were the theme of general conversation; the resistance of the Parliaments was highly applauded; the conduct of the Court was mercilessly condemned, while its scandals were not only exposed but exaggerated. Count Charles de Lameth, Colonel of Cuirassiers, was foremost among the malcontents, and had already made a public profession of the opinions which afterwards brought him into such notoriety. Grave discussions on the rights of peoples, and the inevitable necessity of a great change, were thus mingled with the sarcasms and epigrams which were ceaselessly showered upon the military innovators. Certain English officers who had crossed the Channel for the

purpose of witnessing the manœuvres at the camps, were, on the contrary, objects of openly expressed admiration and esteem. "There," it was said, "are free men; there are the models whom we ought to imitate, and not the machine-soldiers of a despot-king!"

Thus, while the throne, around which clouds were gathering heavily, was beginning to totter, its chief prop, the army—which ought to have been treated with the utmost consideration—was wounded in its tastes, feelings, and habits; and, revolting against a system offensive to it, against an apprenticeship for which the French soldier is unfit, did not hesitate to discuss questions of high policy, and to take an active part in them.

This disposition of men's minds could not possibly escape the notice of the Prince who was in command of us. The camp was broken up, and the troops sent back into garrison; but they took thither with them ideas and opinions which had developed themselves amidst the great gathering of which they had formed a part. According to observations made at the time, the state of affairs at the camp of Metz was almost identical with that at Saint-Omer. Only a deplorable degree of blindness, and that thirst for renown which beset men impatient to secure the triumph of their own hazardous notions, could account for such an act as the massing together of troops, for the sole purpose of worrying them,

under such circumstances. The very moment at which they were shaking their chains was selected for imposing fresh fetters upon the soldiers, for reducing them to the condition of automaton. Never was a more foolish deed perpetrated, or one that was followed by results more fatal to those who were guilty of it.

I returned to Versailles in October 1788. During my absence, which had only extended over a few weeks, the aspect of the Court had undergone a great change. The respectful silence of the courtiers and the attendants, the strict forms of etiquette formerly so scrupulously observed, had given place to a freedom of speech and a method of expression to which the ears of our princes were unaccustomed. A drawing together of the different classes of society had become perceptible, the interior of the Palace was more easy of access, in short, that sort of familiarity which is established between men by services requested and promised was making itself felt. The two Assemblies of the Notables, the failure of the plans of Cardinal de Loménie's Ministry, the positive promise of the Convocation of the States-General, the first stirrings of sedition which had manifested themselves in Paris, the return of M. Necker, and the publications of the day, had produced this great change. External customs still existed indeed, but they were frequently violated with impunity. In

short, the Court, such as Louis XIV. had made it, existed no longer : it has not re-formed itself since, and probably it never will re-form itself.

It is not my intention to recapitulate the events which took place between the Convocation of the States-General and their meeting. I was too far from the councils in which that momentous measure was so lightly discussed and so imprudently adopted, to be able to throw any light upon such a subject. Besides, several writers have handled it more ably than I could do ; I should be obliged either to copy them, or to extract fragments from the pamphlets of the time, were I to write the history of that epoch after my fashion. My object is not to follow in the track of other writers, but only to relate what I have seen, and how I have seen it. I shall therefore confine myself to detailing a few particulars of what happened at Versailles from the beginning of 1789, until the 5th of October of the same year, that famous and disastrous day which forced Louis XVI. to take up his abode at the Tuileries, and to quit the sumptuous palace of Versailles, never again to behold it.

Prior to those times of disturbance and revolution, when the Court was the whole State, three principal personages divided it among them, and each exercised a more or less decisive influence ; the Queen, Monsieur (afterwards Louis XVIII.), and the Comte

d'Artois (afterwards Charles X.); but the Queen's party had always been the strongest. The Queen's domination was chiefly exercised through her influence over the mind of her husband, a man of pure life and good intentions, but whose qualities were injured by weakness of character and temperament which rendered him incapable of forming and adhering to any resolution; and this although he was capable of profound dissimulation, the fruit of the evil education which was given to the princes of the House of Bourbon, and which was partially the cause of their misfortunes.

The three powers were seldom agreed. The Comte d'Artois, who put no restraint upon his passions, indulged to excess in gambling and profligacy. While he was the intimate companion of the young men of the Court, who were led by his example, he was at the same time duped and robbed by old debauchees, who took advantage of his inexperience. For the rest, he meddled but little with the administration of affairs or the selection of Ministers, requiring nothing of the latter except money wherewith to pay his debts, which amounted to an enormous sum at the epoch of the first Assembly of the Notables. He did not begin to take part in public affairs until the beginning of the year 1787, when, by declaring himself against any concession to the ideas of the times, and by supporting M. de

Calonne, he exhibited opinions and took a line entirely contrary to those adopted or followed by his brother.

Monsieur was a clever man, but he was held to be pedantic. He was disliked in the Queen's circle, where he was nicknamed "Hortensius." Being repulsed by that clique, which, according to him, did not do justice to his merit, he made one for himself, more intimate and less restrained, formed relations, and had love affairs in which the intellectual rather than the animal side of his character was, it was said, engaged. The resentment which he cherished against the Queen, and the natural bent of his mind, led to his appearing in the Assembly of the Notables as the chief of the Liberal party, and to his being regarded as belonging to the sect of the philosophers. Henceforth he stood high in the opinion of the public, and if he had had sufficient courage and real attachment to the new ideas to put himself at the head of the movement which was then beginning, he would probably have been able to prevent some of its excesses. But it seems that he aimed rather at rendering himself formidable to the Queen, who had scorned him, and turned him into ridicule, than at achieving a more serious sort of distinction, and when he had gratified his private revenge, he withdrew from the stage on which he had made a brief appearance, and hid himself from all observers.

The Queen's party, composed of a number of amiable and clever men and women, but who had no sound importance resulting from superior ability or the *éclat* of great services rendered to the country, held exclusive domination at Court, disposed of all patronage, and succumbed, so to speak, under the mere weight of favour, wealth, and honours. But, just in proportion as the circle which the Queen had formed around herself was calculated to secure to her all the enjoyments of intimate friendship in private life, and the satisfaction of making those whom she loved happy, it was also likely to become fatal to her peace so soon as the eye of the public should penetrate it. This was exactly what happened at the moment when the imperative needs of the social condition of the country turned men's minds towards projects of improvement, the demand for which became increasingly evident with each rent in the veil which covered so much prodigality. When the crisis came, the Queen found no one among her intimates who could aid or sustain her. Her friends had no credit with the outside world; they enjoyed no public esteem, they were objects either of hatred or of envy; and their own safety being seriously menaced, what could they do but escape from the country?

They neither could nor would give her any but bad advice, for they themselves must have been

the first to suffer by wise counsels. It was impossible for them to snatch her away from the brink of the precipice to which they had led her, and they soon found their only resource in flight.

Such was the aspect of the Court of Versailles when the States-General were convoked. Neither good faith nor sincerity had dictated this act. Far from seeking to smooth the difficulties as to the method of deliberation, which were raised by the excited state of public feeling, and the twofold representation granted to the Third Estate, those difficulties were increased by the affected silence maintained on so material a point. The courtier's last hope was that the obstacles would become so entirely insurmountable as to render the meeting of the States impossible, and for that end they all schemed. As a result of this system, the Deputies arriving at Versailles—and particularly those of the Third Estate—far from being made welcome by the Court, were offended by sarcasms and jests from the Queen's circle and that of the Comte d'Artois. The language, the manners, even the names of these new-comers were turned into ridicule, and the very men who were destined to shine soon afterwards by their superior talent and by their impressive speeches, and to dictate to the Throne and this heedless Court, were at first regarded as provincials whom the fine ladies and gentlemen of

Paris and Versailles might mystify with impunity. An obsolete ceremonial, forms of etiquette that had fallen into disuse since greater freedom had penetrated into the atmosphere of the Court, were revived, and thus, between the other two orders and the Deputies of the Third Estate, a line of demarcation, as marked as it was humiliating, was drawn.

In proportion, however, as their reception by the Court was insulting, their welcome in the town was warm and affectionate. They were cordially received into the homes of the citizens, where many of them had arranged to board, and there they freely expressed their resentment and found it shared. Thus, notwithstanding the injunctions of the Court, notwithstanding the dependence upon it of nearly the whole population, the people openly declared themselves in favour of the new opinions, and became so strongly attached to them that in the end they were absolutely hostile to the Court. The sequel has shown that the popular tendencies were not to be despised.

It was in the midst of this agitation that the opening of the States-General took place. I was present, as a spectator, at the ceremony which preceded it on the previous day. In the long procession winding through the wide streets of Versailles, the public remarked with dislike those distinctions of rank and of costume which divided

into three separate classes the men on whom our fate was about to depend, and who ought to have possessed equal rights. It was mortifying to see the gold-embroidered cloaks of the noble Deputies, the plumes waving on their caps, the episcopal purple proudly displayed by the clergy, while a humble cloak of black woollen stuff and a plain round cap, a strange costume revived from the feudal ages, marked the Deputies of the Third Estate. Nevertheless, their firm demeanour, their steady gait, their expression of mingled dissatisfaction and confidence, drew all eyes upon them, and they were received with hearty salutations not offered to the other orders. There was a crowd of courtiers round the Princes, but they passed on amid silence. The King's countenance expressed neither emotion nor interest. He advanced, as usual, without dignity, and seemed to be merely accomplishing some duty of etiquette. Monsieur, who walked with difficulty, was serious and thoughtful; he seemed to be thoroughly impressed with the importance of the day's proceedings. The Comte d'Artois, casting disdainful glances right and left on the crowd lining the streets, showed evident signs of vexation and ill-humour. The Queen, with anxious brow and close-shut lips, made vain endeavours to hide her uneasiness and to impart a look of satisfaction to her noble and majestic countenance; but the weight at her heart, full of

anxiety and bitter thoughts, made her unable to maintain it. At length the States-General, which had opened on May 5th, began to assemble in earnest. I followed their debates with eagerness, and shared in all the agitation of the interval between the opening of the States and their transformation into the National Assembly. When the re-establishment of the National Guard was decreed, I hastened to enrol myself in the section then forming at Versailles. This must have been displeasing to the Court, for it was forbidden to any one belonging to it to join the new militia, and no one wearing the uniform might present himself. And, in fact, I also incurred the blame of the circle in which I had moved since my entrance into society, while some few persons considered that my action did honour to my courage and independence. I deserved, however, neither praise nor blame; for in this I had simply followed the dictates of my conviction. I did not remain long in the National Guard, where I fulfilled the duties of adjutant. A post confided to me by the Comte de la Tour du Pin, the then Minister of War—that of facilitating the arrival of provisions in Paris—took me, in the capacity of War Commissioner, to Rouen for a month, and obliged me in the first instance to suspend my service in the National Guard. After this, the events that took place shortly after my return

compelled me to resign it altogether, and to leave my native town.

Before my departure for Normandy, I had witnessed all the events that took place at Versailles during the three months following the opening of the States-General. I had been present at the famous Royal sitting of June 23, at the oath of the Tennis Court; I had seen the foreign regiments in the pay of France enter Versailles, summoned thither in order to dissolve the States-General; I had seen them marching at night through streets crowded with a silent and startled multitude. I had seen the Queen and her circle with the Comte d'Artois go to the Orangery, where the foreign troops were quartered, applaud their games and dances, share in them, and address words of encouragement and praise to the officers and even to the private soldiers. The headquarters of Marshal de Broglie were at that time established in one of the suites of rooms on the ground-floor of the Palace opening on the South Terrace. I had seen the aides-de-camp and the officers of the staff come in with their reports, and carry away from the very palace of the King orders to march on Paris and punish its inhabitants. Artillery was despatched from Douai and Metz; in a word, warlike preparations, the preludes to sanguinary engagements, were displayed on all sides, in places where, ever

since the time of Louis XIV., nothing had been heard but the sound of festivity, and the pomp of peace and royal magnificence had reigned undisturbed. I had also seen how, in an instant, at the first news of the capital in insurrection, and of the taking of the Bastille, terror had succeeded to warlike impulse; how the brilliant staff and the troops brought from so great a distance had vanished like shadows, and the silence of fear had fallen on the Palace so full of tumult a few days before. All this formed a striking picture of the fragility of human designs, when they are neither matured by reflection nor sustained by high-souled courage.

On rallying from the violent shock of July 14, the Court party adopted a more tranquil attitude, and seemed for a time to resign themselves to their fate. But their conduct had been so false and so contradictory, that no approbation was accorded even to this resignation; and as they had lost all external influence, as suspicion rested on even their most indifferent actions, as, in short, no one had the least doubt of their bad faith, they had nothing to bestow, and their favour was a burden which those with whom they sought to ally themselves could not bear.

Meanwhile the Court had time to breathe, and once more took to listening to perfidious counsels and cherishing chimerical hopes. The Comte d'Artois and the Polignacs had indeed gone

away, but their influence had not departed with them. They had reached a foreign country, and thus secured their personal safety, so they were more than ever urgent in advising violent measures, and represented that the help of foreign Powers would as certainly be lent in carrying such measures into execution.

Then once more arose the questions of flight and of the dissolution of this formidable National Assembly. In consequence of a scheme by which the Municipality of Versailles was induced to request the help of some troops of the line in order to secure the safety of the town, the regiment of Flanders was summoned thither. It was at this time, towards the end of August 1789, that I came back from Rouen. The aspect of Versailles was quiet, but gloomy. The National Assembly were discussing the most important questions of social order with equal precipitation and improvidence, to the accompaniment of almost universal applause. Threatened—and they could not be ignorant of the threat—by the Court, they threw themselves entirely on the people, whose passions they flattered and whose excesses they excused. Thus they laid the foundations of that formidable power which in a short time was not only to rival but to exceed their own. The two parties were drawn up opposite to each other, although hostilities had not begun,

when the Court thought itself strong enough to throw aside the mask, or rather, in its impatience, it laid that mask by unwittingly, without having made any preparations for acting an openly inimical part. The Court party were skilful in sowing dissension among the National Guard at Versailles, they had succeeded in inducing several who had joined it to abandon the service. They distributed white cockades to some young men, who wore them in the Palace apartments, and this mark of devotion to the Royal cause was rewarded with grateful smiles. The officers of the Flanders regiment were loaded with favours; reciprocal complimentary attentions had led to friendship among that regiment, the Body Guards, and a small minority of the National Guard. The Body Guards gave a grand banquet, to which were invited the officers of the Flanders regiment, those of the National Guard, those of the Household troops who were then stationed at Versailles, and also some gentlemen holding high positions at Court and in the Government, or posts in the municipality or the law. Every one knows that this banquet became an orgy, in which the National Cockade was trampled under foot, and that the Court party, which should have used its authority to prevent such a scandalous scene in the palace of the monarch, with inconceivable folly actually

went to the theatre where the banquet was held, and endorsed its disgraceful excesses by their presence. Every one knows that the King, accompanied by the Queen carrying the Dauphin in her arms, made the tour of the table; that they accepted and proposed toasts, and ended by applauding a sham assault made on the Royal box, in which were the King and the Royal Family, by guests excited with wine and political passion, while a military band played the air—"O Richard ! ô mon roi ?"

I had declined an invitation to the banquet, and during this strange scene was walking alone in the gardens of Versailles, when I perceived a disorderly crowd rushing towards the windows of the Queen's apartment. I drew near, and saw them forming into irregular dances, with shouts of "Vive le roi !" "Down with the National Assembly !" They continued to indulge in noisy and senseless demonstrations during great part of the night. I began then to suspect from what was taking place outside how matters had progressed within, and I felt greatly grieved, foreseeing the fatal consequences of the extravagant conduct of that evening.

Nor were those consequences long delayed. Many external symptoms made it evident to the public that the Court was returning to its former projects ; intending either to dissolve the Assembly, or to leave Versailles and take up its abode in some stronghold

on the frontier—the city of Metz being named in particular.

In order to carry out the execution of either plan, the four companies of Body Guards, of whose opinions and devotion there could be no doubt since the scene of the banquet, had been assembled at Versailles.

The Court flattered itself also that some of the officers of the Flanders regiment, and also of the National Guard belonging to the town, who had taken part in the fête, would be carried away by the example of the Body Guards. Thus did they cherish illusions, while the ever-growing agitation in Paris, now raised to the highest pitch of excitement by the account of the extravagant scenes just enacted at Versailles, ought to have roused the Court to alarm, and induced it either to give up such ill-concerted designs, or to hasten to put them in execution.

But the King had to make up his mind, and Louis XVI. was incapable of coming to a decision. He was as impassive as ever, and altered none of his habits. Every day, as usual, he went out hunting. He was hunting on October 5, and it was in the woods of Rambouillet that a messenger on horseback, despatched at 1 P.M., brought him the news of the movements taking place in Paris, and of the march of a mob of ruffians on Versailles.

I will not attempt to relate here the events of that

day and the following (October 6); I shall merely relate without comment what I saw and what I did on those two days.

At 2 P.M. on October 5, I was informed by one of my comrades, an officer of the National Guard, of what was taking place in Paris. I was not on duty, but I thought it right to put on my uniform and hold myself in readiness for a summons. At half-past three the drums beat the general roll-call, and I crossed the Place d'Armes, on my way to the headquarters of the National Guard, which was at the barracks of the French Guards on the right of the Place. As I passed before the outer courtyard of the Palace—the gates were closed—the Comte de la Tour du Pin, Minister of War, recognised me and called me in. The Court was almost filled by the Body Guards, on horseback, drawn up in order of battle.* I walked up and down for some time with the Minister, who told me that a terrible crisis was at hand; that they were expecting the arrival of a mob of men and women, coming from Paris on pretext of asking for bread, but from whom the utmost violence was to be apprehended; that no precautions had been taken; that the King had not yet returned from hunting, but that it could not now be long before he came back; and that in the meantime, as a preliminary

* The French Guards had left Versailles some weeks before.

measure, the Place had been closed and the Body Guards ordered to mount. He remarked that I was in uniform, and asked me where I was going, and what I intended to do. I replied that the general roll-call had been beaten, and that I was on my way to headquarters. He approved, and begged me not to leave the National Guards now assembling, but to unite my efforts with those of the other officers to induce them effectually to resist the attack with which the Palace was threatened. He added that his son, the Marquis de Gouvernet, who was second in command of the Versailles National Guard, of which the Comte d'Estaing was Colonel, had just mounted, and would bring us orders.

I was on the point of taking leave of M. de la Tour du Pin, when he begged me to go from him to the Comte de Saint-Priest, then Minister of the King's Household,* in order to learn whether he had received any further information as to what was occurring in Paris, and to propose that they should concert together such measures as it was desirable to take. M. de Saint-Priest received me rather ungraciously, my uniform was not pleasing to him. He seemed to be in a very bad temper, and told me there was nothing to be done, all that was happening was the consequence of the mistaken

* The Minister of the King's Household included in his department Paris and the interior of the kingdom.

conduct of the Court and the weakness of the King ; moreover, there was, so far as he knew, only a mob of drunken women and poor ragged wretches to deal with—that they had no arms, and that the least movement of regular troops would easily put them to flight ; but that action would be necessary, and above all no fear must be shown. Finally, he told me he would meet the Comte de la Tour du Pin at the Council, which was certain to be called immediately on the King's return.

I carried this reply to M. de la Tour du Pin,* and was not a little astonished to find on his staircase a dozen women from Paris. The Suisse had allowed them to come in, and they were seated on the stairs. They seemed exhausted by fatigue and hunger, and had been supplied with food. They told me they had started in advance from Paris in order to ask the King for bread, and that they were followed by a larger number, who were coming on with the same intention. While one of them was telling me these things, the others were crying out, "Vive le roi ! let him give us bread !" The Suisse told them to be silent, and they obeyed. The scene was at once piteous and absurd.

After I had repeated to the Minister what M. de Saint-Priest had said to me, I resumed my way to

* The four Ministers, Secretaries of State, resided in the first Court of the Palace, called the Ministers' Court.

the barracks; but instead of going by the Ministers' Courtyard, I crossed what is called the Princes' Courtyard, and I perceived the Duke of Orleans at the window of the apartments on the ground-floor on the right. He was leaning on the ledge of the window, and speaking, with some gesticulation, to a person standing in front of him. He was in full dress, and wore on his coat the Order of the Holy Ghost. It was then about four in the afternoon.

I went on to the terrace of the Palace facing south, and there I found a squadron of the Body Guards on horseback. Finally, after making the round of the Palace, I returned to the Place d'Armes and reached the barracks of the French Guards.

The aspect presented at that moment by the Place d'Armes was as follows. The Flanders regiment was drawn up in line reaching from the left angle of the Palace gate to the Avenue de Paris. Several persons, among whom I recognised some Deputies of the National Assembly, were walking in front of the troops with the officers of the regiment. Part of the population of Versailles had rushed in to the Place and filled it, but all was quiet, and there was no perceptible movement. Opposite the Flanders regiment was the National Guard of Versailles in front of the barracks, but within the wooden barrier which separates the precincts of the barracks from the Place itself. This guard was in small numbers

and in very bad order. Instead of finding it complete, as I expected, I saw that the small number of men who were mustered were out of uniform, poorly clothed, and badly armed. None of the men of mark in this militia, whether by fortune or position, showed on that occasion ; and those who at reviews or on days of ceremony appeared in brilliant uniform and wearing epaulettes, now kept themselves shut up within doors. The National Guard under arms at the moment—their number did not exceed two hundred—also remarked these facts. Their observations were accompanied by insulting criticisms and abusive language. I felt that no reliance could be placed on men thus ill-disposed, and that far from finding in them a force which we might oppose to the dangers with which we were threatened, they would lend their aid to disorder. I remained, nevertheless, at their head, with a few superior officers who arrived one by one.

All, however, continued quiet, and the ill-humour of our men was evaporating in more or less abusive talk against their chiefs and the Court, when, although the daylight was beginning to fade (it was about six in the evening), seven or eight of the King's carriages were seen leaving the great stables situated on the right of the barracks, and proceeding, by the Rue Satory, to the gates of the Orangery which open on the high road to Chartres

and Brittany. At this sight several of the National Guards exclaimed that the King certainly intended to go, and that he must be prevented. The troop wavered, and, heedless of the remonstrances of their officers, about thirty men rushed forward, and taking short cuts through by-streets, reached the gates of the Orangery and closed them before the arrival of the carriages, which they forced to return the way they came. This unexpected incident destroyed all the projects that had been formed at the Palace.* The King, who could have mounted his horse and placed himself at the head of his Body Guard, was disconcerted by a mischance which it would have been very easy to foresee, or to repair, by sending a picket of guards to the gate, and he again sank into his usual state of indecision, and awaited events.

The National Guards who had hastened to stop the Royal carriages, returned to barracks more irritated and angry than before, and I felt certain from their language that nothing would now check them; those who did not share in their feelings having taken advantage of the dusk to disappear one by one. Thus there remained but fifty or sixty men under arms. It was six o'clock in the evening.

* The carriages were to have received the Court at the foot of the Orangery steps, and nothing then could have prevented the flight of the King. The road was free, and the Body Guards assembled in the courtyard and on the terrace would have supplied a sufficient escort.

At about the same hour, the gates of the Palace were thrown open, and Body Guards from the courtyard as well as those from the terrace—their presence being no longer necessary, since the King had given up the thought of departure—began to defile past so as return to their Hotel, in the Avenue des Sceaux. These troops, in order to reach the Avenue, had to pass through the Place d'Armes, crossing it in front of the French Guards' barracks, then occupied by us. On perceiving them, part of the National Guard moved forward towards the wooden barrier which, as I have said, separated the precincts of the barracks from the Place; the rest remained in front of the building. The head of the column of Body Guards which were defiling at a trot, four abreast, had barely passed the barrier, when I saw a flash of fire-arms from among them. At the same moment, the National Guards, without waiting for orders, replied by an irregular volley, levelling their guns at the Body Guards. The latter instantly set off at a gallop, before the shooters, terrified at what they had done, had thought of reloading their arms.

A gloomy silence succeeded to this momentary tumult. We afterwards approached the barrier, but could find no trace either of the discharge from the column of the Body Guards, nor of the shot fired from the barracks. Shortly after, M. de Gouvernet arrived on horseback; he ordered us

to withdraw all the Guard except that part which was on duty. He assured us that the King had no intention of leaving Versailles; that everything was now tranquil; that the Body Guards and the Flanders regiment had returned to their quarters; but that if anything extraordinary should happen, the drums were to beat to arms.

As I was not on duty, I withdrew, and repaired to a house where I habitually spent my evenings. I found the company much excited by the events of the day, and especially by the shots they had heard. Each one explained them according to his own opinions or passions, some asserting that the National Guard had fired first, and others that one of the Body Guard had fired his pistol at one of the National Guards who was near the barrier. I narrated what I had seen, and as nothing absolutely decisive in favour of one opinion or the other could be drawn from my account, each individual maintained his own, and even to the present day the question remains unsettled.

On returning home at eleven in the evening, I again passed by the barracks. I found only a few men there, but near the barrier I remarked a large fire. I approached, and saw, gathered round this fire, a group of men armed with pikes, and women of hideous aspect. They were busied in cutting up a dead horse, and roasting the flesh.

I was told that the horse had been found on the Place ; it had been probably killed by a shot from the barracks when the National Guards had fired. I could learn nothing farther.

I had scarcely reached my house when I heard the drums beating. On inquiry, I found that the National Guard of Paris was approaching, with M. de la Fayette at its head. A grenadier in one of the Paris battalions, who was a friend of my father, came to see us, and quieted our apprehensions as to the aim of this disturbance. He said that the two churches of Versailles had been assigned as quarters to the different battalions, but that he had preferred asking us for a night's lodging. We made him welcome, and I went to bed. It was then midnight.

At seven in the morning, October 6, I heard the drums beating. I arose in haste, and made my way towards the Palace across the gardens. In the courtyards I saw the vanguards of the battalions of the Parisian National Guard, which were arriving in good form, and falling successively into order. M. de la Fayette was at their head. While these troops were advancing and occupying different posts, I ascended the marble staircase and entered the interior of the Palace, all the intricacies of which I knew perfectly. The posts generally occupied by the Body Guard and the Hundred Swiss were vacant ; the guard-room and the antechambers leading to the

Queen's apartment were deserted ; there were stains of blood on the floor and on the stairs. The greatest disorder prevailed ; men clothed in rags and armed with pikes were hurrying down the steps which I had ascended ; the doors of the Queen's apartment lay open ; not a servant was to be seen, either man or woman ; the furniture, including even the Queen's bed, was knocked about or moved from its place. From all this it was plain that the rooms had been forcibly entered, that the Body Guards, no more numerous than usual, had been taken by surprise, and that, after having defended the entry, they had been obliged to yield to force and retreat ; and also that several of them had shed their blood in making a hopeless resistance.

The King's apartment, on the contrary, was closed. I returned by the same way I had come, and then I beheld the National Guard of Paris, in the courtyards, in line of battle, with flags flying and in perfect order. A crowd of people, and numerous groups of men and women, strangers to Versailles, were pressing behind the troops, uttering shouts and howls, and brandishing their pikes, on some of which were human heads. It was a horrible and revolting spectacle ! The furious mob was, however, kept in check by the presence of the National Guard, and a portion of it, even, seeing there was nothing more for them to do, began to return along

the road to Paris, whither they bore their bloody trophies.

Lost in the crowd, and dumb with horror, I was contemplating this fearful scene, when another of a more imposing kind presented itself. The windows of the balcony of the King's apartment, looking on to the inner courtyard, called the Marble Court, were thrown open. The King appeared on the balcony, accompanied by the Queen, by his children and by the Princesses.* Their appearance was saluted by cries of "Vive le roi! vive la famille royale!" M. de la Fayette and M. Necker stood near the King and Queen, and behind them was a group consisting principally of Body Guards, disarmed and bareheaded. The King seemed to be begging that his faithful servants should be spared, by placing them, in some sort, under the protection of the Parisian National Guard, and M. de la Fayette was endeavouring to explain the meaning of the King's gestures. I was at too great a distance to hear distinctly the words that were used, but the National Guard replied by cries of assent. Then the Body Guards, throwing their sashes and white cockades over the balcony, received in exchange tricolor cockades and caps belonging to grenadiers of the National Guard. They fastened in the cockades and put on the caps. After this kind of treaty of peace, confirmed

* Madame Elisabeth and the aunts of the King.

by loud shouts, I heard some voices, at first few in number, but afterwards becoming more and more general, and proceeding from every rank in the National Guard, demanding that the King should come to live in Paris. At first these cries seemed to receive no attention, but the clamour soon became so loud, and was mingled with so many threats, that it was impossible to evade a reply. The King and Queen were in consultation with M. de la Fayette and M. Necker on the balcony, and at last, after a quarter of an hour's indecision, the latter came forward—a profound silence prevailed—and I distinctly heard the Minister announce that the King consented to proceed to Paris, and to take up his abode there for the future.

M. de la Fayette confirmed this resolution by voice and gesture. A transport of joy impossible to depict or to express instantly pervaded the crowd, salvos of musketry were fired, and shouts of “Vive le roi!” resounded on every side. When the tumult had somewhat subsided, the King retired with his family into the private apartments, and it was announced that the Court would leave Versailles at one o'clock in the afternoon. It was then about 9 A.M.

The National Guard of Paris piled their arms in the courtyards of the Palace, and dispersed about the town, while awaiting the hour fixed for the King's

departure, when they were to resume them, and escort the Royal travellers. The greater part of the crowd of men armed with pikes had already set out for Paris, followed by some of the women. In the meantime, the National Guard of Versailles was assembling on the Place d'Armes, by order of its commanding officers, and I, having put on my uniform, hastened to join the ranks. The Guard was to line the way when the King passed, and as nothing more than a ceremonial parade was in question, there was a numerous muster, and all was in good order.

At about one o'clock the cortège began to move. A strong advance guard was formed of several battalions of the National Guard of Paris. Tipsy women were seated on the gun-carriages, singing and waving aloft boughs which they had torn from the trees. But I did not see the heads carried on pikes, of which mention has been made in certain narratives. The men who took those horrible spoils of a night of crime back to Paris were already far away. The King's carriages came next; they were surrounded by several of the Body Guard; some seated on the box, or on the shafts of the coaches, and looking much more as though they had sought a refuge there, than as though they were occupying a post of defence. A great many of them still wore

the grenadiers' caps, and all displayed the tricolored cockade.

As I have already said, we lined the way, and from my position in front of the men I could easily observe everything. The King's face was quite unchanged, but the countenance of the Queen betrayed agonizing grief, notwithstanding the strong efforts which she made to repress the outward signs of her feelings. Monsieur's carriage followed that of the King, and the others were occupied by persons of the household. There were ten or twelve carriages in all. M. de la Fayette was on horseback, now at the side of the King's carriage, anon riding forward to give orders. Two ranks of National Guards marched in parallel lines with the carriages; the remainder of that numerous body formed the rear-guard. I followed this strange procession with my eyes until it reached the turn into the Avenue de Paris, where at length it disappeared.

During the rest of the day I wandered about the deserted gardens and palace, and through the streets of the town, where the silence was broken only by the wheels of the carriages in which the Deputies and Ministers, all eager to leave Versailles, were setting out for Paris. All night the town was patrolled. This was an unnecessary precaution,

perfect quiet reigned everywhere. I was at the head of one of the patrolling parties, and this was the last turn of duty I did with the National Guard of Versailles. Two days later I resigned, and set out for Paris, whither I had been summoned by M. de le Tour du Pin, who was still Minister of War.

CHAPTER II.

The 10th of August, 1792—The Author escapes a decree of accusation—M. Lacuée provisional Chief of the War Department—Joseph Servan, Minister—The Author ceases to be Chief of Division at the Ministry, and enters the Administration of Military Affairs as Comptroller-General—Servan is succeeded in the Ministry by Pache and Hassenfratz, who disorganise its administration—Pache is dismissed, and succeeded by Beurnonville—The Author resumes his former post at the Ministry—Bouchotte succeeds Beurnonville—The Author is made Secretary-General in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs under Deforgues—Sketches of some of the leaders of the Terror—Fall of Deforgues, who is succeeded at the Foreign Office by a schoolmaster named Buchot—The Author, denounced as a “Moderate,” is placed under a decree of accusation, together with MM. Otto, Colchen, and Reinhart—They are saved by the 9th Thermidor—The Author is appointed Commissioner of Foreign Affairs—His communications with the Committee of Public Safety—Treaties of peace with Tuscany and Prussia.

I HAD been settled in Paris since October 1789, and I continued in the service of the Military Administration which I had entered at Versailles. I occupied at first the post of “Chief of the Bureau,” and afterwards that of “Chief of Division,” under

the different Ministers who succeeded each other at the War Department up to August 10, 1792.

I was included at this period in the proscription which fell upon a great number of Government employés, and I was to have been arrested and thrown into prison, where I should probably have been one of the victims of the massacres of the 2nd of September. But, fortunately as it turned out, I was anxious about the health of my wife and daughter, then at Versailles, and on the very morning of the 10th of August I had left Paris by the Clichy Gate, and had made my way to Versailles, across the plain of Sablons, the Bois de Boulogne, St. Cloud, and the woods above the ancient palace of our Kings, the pathways of which were perfectly familiar to me. During my progress, the noise of cannon and musket-shot in Paris caused me terrible anguish of mind ; but I only hastened the more quickly on my way, and reached Versailles about noon, trembling with apprehension, ignorant of what had taken place in Paris, and unable to reply to any of the questions put to me. In the evening the details of that terrible day became known. I concealed myself carefully on the morrow, fearing to be arrested as non-domiciled, and on the succeeding day (August 12), I took my place in one of the little carriages that for some time had been running between Versailles

and Paris. We passed without difficulty through the gates, which were closed against all who wanted to leave the city, but freely open to all in-comers. On reaching my father's house, I found that a warrant for my arrest had been issued, and that a search had been made for me, in order that it might be put in force. I also heard that my brother-in-law, M. Arcambal, Commissioner-Director of War and Secretary-General of the Ministry, and my uncle, M. Vauchelle, chief Clerk of Artillery, had already been arrested. After acquainting me with this sad news, my father added that he had stated that he did not know where I was, but that I might be heard of at the residence of the War Minister.

Thereupon I quickly decided on my course of action, which was to proceed to the War Office. I learnt there from my fellow-clerks that emissaries of the Commune had in fact come on the previous day to arrest me; that, not finding me, they had left one of their number behind to seize me on my return, and enforce the warrant against me, but that the individual, weary of waiting to no purpose, had departed, and had not since reappeared. The Legislative Assembly had appointed M. Lacuée, one of its members, to administer the department until the arrival of the new Minister of War. I thought it right to wait upon him, and found him, wearing a tricolor sash, and installed in the Minister's

cabinet. I told him that I presented myself, in order that he might not suspect me of trying to escape the search now being made for me. He received me politely, said he had no orders to take any steps against me, but that, on the contrary, he requested me to return to my work, and to assist him in the difficult position in which he found himself. He complained of the excesses of the Commune in Paris, which had disorganised every official department by its arbitrary arrests; and in fact he was equally indignant at the acts of that seditious authority as he was powerless to repress them.

I therefore resumed my usual occupations, expecting every instant to be arrested at my desk. But I was not arrested; either it was believed that the warrant had already been executed, or I was forgotten; at all events, I remained at liberty. I even had the very great happiness of saving one of our friends, M. Jullien, who took refuge in my house, and of aiding with him in the release of my uncle and my brother-in-law, whom I have mentioned above, and who were, marvellous to relate, set at liberty a few days before the 2nd of September.

Meanwhile the Legislative Assembly had appointed Joseph Servan Minister of War. He was brother to the celebrated Advocate-General of the

same name, and had already occupied that post, to which he had been appointed by the King. He had connected himself with the now triumphant Girondist party, and sent in his resignation some months previously. The Assembly had solemnly declared that on quitting his post he carried with him the regrets of France. During his first tenure of office I had frequently been brought into contact with him; he was acquainted with my opinions and knew that I did not share his. In fact, although I occupied a somewhat obscure position, I had not been permitted to conceal my opinions; and I was naturally opposed to any disguise of the kind. I was—and he knew it—what was called at that time a Constitutional Monarchist, a Moderate, a “*feuillant*.” I belonged to the club so-called, although my dislike of assemblies of that kind generally kept me away from it. All these circumstances being known to M. Servan, he could not feel confidence in me; and although my thorough acquaintance with the details of the Ministry rendered me useful, he felt that by retaining me he might incur censure, and would expose himself to danger without being able to protect me. Nevertheless he received me with some cordiality, after his appointment to the War Office by the Assembly; but as my views of my position there were the same as his, we soon agreed to separate. He accepted my resignation of the post

of Chief of Division—I sent it in on the pretext of ill-health—and placed me as Comptroller-General in the Administration of Military Affairs, a position little known and quite obscure, where I hoped to be out of the reach of investigation. But it was fated otherwise. The National Convention had just met, and the Girondists who had placed Servan at the head of the War Office, having lost by degrees the powerful influence they had exercised over the Legislative Assembly, Servan was attacked, dismissed, and replaced (October 4, 1792) by Pache, a creature of the Communist party. On the arrival of the new Minister, the whole War-Administration was upset. Every man of intelligence or experience was dismissed, and Hassenfratz, placed by Pache at the head of one of the most important divisions of the department, raised confusion to its highest pitch; he persecuted all the former employés by his denunciations, and treated them with the severity inspired by instinctive ill-will, disguised under the hypocritical mask of enthusiastic republicanism. Nor was I to escape: in the month of December there was some thought of entrusting me with a mission connected with the administration to which I belonged: he refused me my passports and the necessary orders, expressing surprise that my name had been left on the list of employés in his department. This expression of opinion on the part

of a man who was at that time all-powerful, was equivalent to a sentence of death, and doubtless I should have perished had my persecutor had time to carry his evil intentions into execution.

At this critical moment of my fate Pache himself was violently attacked by Dumouriez. The latter had just entered Belgium after his brilliant victory at Jemappes, and could not carry on the war with a Minister who was disorganising everything. He had great influence in the Convention; prevailed over the Commune, and carried the dismissal of Pache early in February 1793. Pache was succeeded by Beurnonville, who had served with distinction in the Belgian campaign, and was nicknamed by Dumouriez "the French Ajax."

Beurnonville, on coming into office, sent for me and offered to restore me to my former post. Since the time when Hassenfratz had declared war against me, and during the trial of Louis XVI., I had frequently absented myself from Paris, to avoid the dangers that threatened me, and also the sight of the terrible tragedy then impending, of that sanguinary execution which shortly afterwards polluted the capital of France; but I had not relinquished my habitual residence. I was there when Beurnonville's propositions were made to me. I acceded to them, and re-entered the War Office.

Under the new Minister the Administration began to work more regularly, and to emerge from the lethargy into which Pache and Hassenfratz had plunged it. But this state of things did not last long. The reverses experienced by the French army, and which in the early part of 1793 forced us to evacuate Belgium; the defection of Dumouriez; the internal discord in the Convention, a stormy prelude to the Reign of Terror that followed the execution of Louis XVI. and which was now developing itself; these were among the causes that combined to efface every trace of a short-lived improvement. Beurnonville, who was sent with Camus, Guinette, Lamarque, and Bancal, Commissioners of the Convention, to arrest Dumouriez, wished to take me with him, as he was very friendly to me. I had agreed to go, when fortunately the necessity for retaining a confidential person in the War Department, in which Beurnonville intended to resume his post after a short absence, led him to decide on leaving me in Paris. We know the fate that awaited him; and I should no doubt have shared his long imprisonment.

When, in April 1793, Beurnonville was arrested by order of Dumouriez, together with the Commissioners of the Convention, and the post of War Minister became vacant, the Convention appointed Bouchotte to succeed him. Bouchotte was Commandant of

Arms at Cambrai, and had hitherto been undistinguished in the military career on which he had barely entered. It was only the favour of the Paris Commune that had placed him among the candidates. The Commune hoped to find in him a second Pache, and in some respects were not disappointed. The devotion of the new Minister to this odious faction was unquestionable; he gave frequent proofs of it. Nevertheless, under a plain exterior, with foolish ways, and a bearing which often caused him to be wrongfully accused of total incapacity, Bouchotte had talents and qualities for administration, an upright mind, and the capacity for steady application to business. He even displayed great activity, which seemed at variance with his physical organisation. It was while he was Minister that the garrison of Mayence was removed to La Vendée, and this strange enterprise, the management of which devolved upon me, was carried through with remarkable precision. At this period, too, the telegraph, an invention which rendered great service to military correspondence, came into use.* Notwithstanding the severity exercised

* M. Chappe, the inventor (or supposed to be so) of the telegraph, came to me at the War Office. David, the famous painter, introduced him. Chappe explained to me the method of using his machine, to which he gave the name of *tachygraphe* ("writes quickly"). I proposed to him to substitute for this imperfect description that of *telegraphe* ("writes from afar").

in those deplorable days towards so many general officers whose lives were taken by the Convention, I had opportunities of observing that Bouchotte was altogether opposed to these condemnations, and that he saved the lives of many persons who do not know they are under any such obligation to him. Among others, I may name General Canclaux.

When a man appointed by the Paris Commune made his appearance at the Ministry of War, I believed myself irrecoverably lost, and I confidently expected the reappearance of all the officials who had been formerly employed by Pache, such as Hassenfratz, Sijas and others, who had withdrawn with their chief. But, to my great surprise, Bouchotte did not reinstate them. He even insisted on retaining me, treated me with the fullest confidence in everything regarding the affairs of the Administration, neither inquired into my political opinions, alluded on any occasion to his own, nor solicited me to embrace them, although I worked with him many hours daily. Nevertheless, I felt my position to be one of constant constraint. A reverse to our troops, an act of forgetfulness or of negligence, anything that should give room for the most trivial

He adopted this alteration. The name "telegraph" has become, so to speak, a household word.

denunciation, might bring irretrievable ruin upon me, and I ardently longed to escape from so critical a position. I saw that I owed the consideration with which I was treated solely to the necessity that existed for making use of my experience in the Administration, and that so soon as that necessity should subside, I should be left alone and without a protector to repel the attacks upon me that would inevitably be renewed. I was convinced that the Minister would not willingly dismiss, nor would he denounce me, but I was also aware that he had some difficulty in maintaining his own position, and that, as he was obliged to purchase by continual concessions such protection as was afforded him by the party which had placed him in office, he would be unable to defend me, and certainly would not for my sake put his own popularity in peril. While I was in this state of perplexity, an opportunity of leaving my perilous post offered itself, and I eagerly embraced it. Several assistants had been appointed to the War Ministry. One of these, named Deforgues, with whom I had been brought into constant contact, was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs, on June 24, 1793. He proposed that I should change into that department with him, and take the place of Secretary-General. I accepted. Bouchotte was with difficulty induced to part with me, but eventually he consented. I therefore

relinquished at this time the career I had adopted in my youth, but resumed it, as will appear in the course of my narrative, just after the 18th Brumaire, year VIII.

A new era had now begun for me. This change in my career eventually called me to high functions in the public Administration, when, after the Reign of Terror, a regular Government was formed in France.

My first experiences in the new course on which I was entering justified the decision I had taken, and realised some of my expectations. I had calculated that, foreign relations with France being for the present almost at an end, I should be less exposed to remarks in a department which had next to nothing to do than in the War Office, which at that time was the centre of attention; and that Deforgues, who, on attaining to the Ministry, had called me to his side in consequence of the events of May 31st, and who was a man of a firm and decided character, would be a more substantial support to me. It was also with great inward satisfaction that I found myself in an Administration where I should have to work with men of high intelligence as well as of honourable character, such men as MM. Otto, Colchen, Reinhart and Boissonade, who were at the head of the principal divisions of the Ministry. The mere difference in speech seemed to me an inesti-

mable advantage ; to the coarse, rough ways adopted in the War Office, succeeded politeness and elegance of manner, the result of a gentlemanly education and the habit of association with foreigners. I found traces of the former customs of the monarchy still existing in this department. Far from seeking to efface them, Deforgues, who, notwithstanding the party he had joined, had natural good sense and sound judgment, seemed to take pleasure in them, and to desire a restoration of order, decorum, and urbanity.

In this way, with less personal danger than I had hitherto incurred in the terrible storm then devastating France, I passed through the six months which elapsed between June 1793 and the end of the year. During that period I had several opportunities of seeing Danton, the patron of Deforgues, at whose house he frequently dined. I was often invited, as were also my colleagues, Otto and Colchen. These dinner-parties often included Lacroix, Legendre, Fabre d'Eglantine, Camille Desmoulins, and less often Robespierre, whom, indeed, I met but once.

I will pause here for an instant, and endeavour to describe the impression which was produced on me by the appearance and conversation of those famous and criminal Revolutionists, whom I saw for a few moments, as it were, in their private life, and away

from the bloody stage on which they daily displayed their fury. My colleagues and I had our places at the end of the table, and took no part in the conversation; we were mere observers, and it is the result of my observations that I am now about to record.

Danton, the most remarkable of all the personages whom I have named, had a hideous face. His proportions were athletic; in that respect he was even thought to resemble Mirabeau. But the complexion of the latter was of a livid pallor, while that of Danton was of a reddish-brown, and his countenance was very animated. The tone of his voice was impressive, he spoke with warmth and energy that appeared natural to him. His elocution was fiery, and always accompanied by violent gesticulations; at table he generally struck the key-note of the conversation, and made frequent use of figurative expressions—"The chariot-wheels of the Revolution will crush its enemies;" "The Revolution is like Saturn: it will devour its children"—and other phrases of the same kind. He felt profound contempt for the Girondists, regarding them as fools who had recoiled before the logical results of their principles. He made no secret of his love of pleasure and of money, and sneered at vain scruples of conscience and delicacy. Intrenched in the club of the Cordeliers, which he looked upon as a citadel always open to him,

he believed himself to be unassailable. The cynicism of his morals exhibited itself in his language, for he despised the hypocrisy of some of his colleagues, and his sarcasms on this vice were principally directed against Robespierre; whom, however, he did not venture to name. Nevertheless it was easily to be seen that Robespierre was the enemy whom he most dreaded, although he affected to despise his party. "They would not dare," he often said, and this rash confidence was his ruin. He thought himself sufficiently strong to leave Paris in the spring of 1794 with impunity, for the purpose of passing a few days on an estate he had acquired at Bar-sur-Aube. He gave himself up when there to the enjoyment of the luxury he had procured by his extortions in Belgium, and thus absented himself from the battle-field. On his return he had lost his influence, and Robespierre, all powerful at the time, sent him to the scaffold.

Lacroix, a friend of Danton's, and his colleague in his mission to Belgium, where they both enriched themselves, was of gigantic stature, but of fine proportions, and was a handsome man. He had taken Danton for his model, imitated his manners, and repeated or paraphrased his speeches. The whole of his oratorical talent lay in this imitation. He spoke little, ate a great deal, and applauded the sayings of his master by gesture only. He followed him to the scaffold.

Fabre d'Eglantine's manner of talking was graceful, but affected. Notwithstanding his efforts to conform to the Revolutionary style of speech, it was evidently antipathetic to him, and the ring of a refined education was heard through a coarse exterior. When the conversation turned, as rarely happened, on literary subjects, he eagerly joined in it, and displayed great acquirements. He was an admirer of Molière, and spoke of him enthusiastically. I have heard him make remarks on the works of that great genius which were as striking as they were novel. I remember that, when descanting one day on the merits of the "Bourgeois Gentilhomme," he said: "It is a great mistake to think in this play that Molière intended to insult the middle classes. He aimed it at the nobility, and was merciless. He certainly holds up to ridicule the folly of a *bourgeois* who wants to pass for a nobleman; but M. Jourdain, with all his folly, is none the less a very upright man; a good husband, a good father, a generous and practical friend. The rogue, in the play, is the gentleman, Dorante, who is both a flatterer and a cheat. He is a wretch, who deserves only our contempt. All Molière's talent was needed to mislead as to his real meaning, and at the same time it required immense courage thus to exhibit the vices of courtiers on the stage, under the very eyes of

the Court." This view of Molière's genius reveals discernment in the critic, and Fabre d'Eglantine has proved by his own writings for the stage that he could appreciate and successfully imitate him whom he had taken for his model. He was indicted as an accomplice of Danton, and perished with him.

Legendre, a Paris butcher, was of small stature, and deeply pitted with small-pox. He spoke with the greatest facility. Gifted by nature with extraordinary but quite uncultivated eloquence, his speeches in public, his conversation in private, were full of original and happy turns. He was an ardent patriot, and fell into the greatest revolutionary excesses, but there is no doubt that he acted in good faith and sincerity, following the impulses of a passionate but misguided love of liberty, and a mind never restrained by the curb of reason or reflection. I often admired this man when, on leaving the Convention where he had supported the most blood-thirsty proceedings, he would return to private life, and talk to us of its charms with an accent of truth impossible to simulate. He would speak of his own domestic happiness, of his wife and children, in the tone of the best of husbands and fathers, sometimes betraying his emotion by the tears that stood in his eyes. He was an incomprehensible mixture of political ferocity and social virtues, proving that man, with his strange mobility of imagination, can

unite in himself the most wondrous contradictions. He was a partisan of Danton, whom he regarded, he said, as the Hercules of the Revolution, and was never weary of praising him when speaking of his talents in a public capacity; but he blamed him openly for his manner of life, and for his luxurious tastes, and never joined in any of his disgraceful speculations. Animated discussions on this subject would frequently arise between them; and although Danton always turned the matter into a jest, and pretended to laugh at the preaching of his colleague, Legendre never yielded, and it was evident that his words pierced to the quick. Lastly, this remarkable and singularly-organised man had succeeded in inspiring such a general respect that, notwithstanding his openly-avowed attachment to Danton, Saint-Just did not venture to include him in the indictment of the latter. And although, even after the death of Danton, Legendre continued to defend him, he was never proscribed, but was in a position to attack Robespierre on the 9th Thermidor, and to contribute to his fall. He was therefore an exception, and although one of the most enthusiastic members of the Convention, he escaped almost alone from the fate which the fiery revolutionists of that terrible time had to endure. After the establishment of the Constitution of Year III. he was elected member of the Council of Former Members (*Conseil des Anciens*),

and died in his bed, at Paris, at the beginning of year VI. (end of 1797), being still a member of the Council, and leaving no fortune behind him.

Camille Desmoulins was also among the number of those who dined pretty frequently at Deforgues'. His personal appearance was commonplace, he had no external advantages, nor did his conversation belie the grudging hand with which Nature had endowed him. Gloomy and silent, his countenance wore an expression of profound melancholy, and it was difficult to recognise the orator of the early days of the Revolution of 1789, the orator who, standing on a chair at the Palais Royal, had by his stirring speech produced the great popular movement of that famous period. At the time when I was in the habit of seeing him, he was horror-struck at the terrible scenes which passed before his eyes every day, and was endeavouring to arouse a spirit of humanity. In several numbers of a newspaper entitled 'Le Vieux Cordelier,' which was edited by him, he ventured (for it was then an act of the greatest courage) to advocate a return to clemency. Danton laughed at him for what he chose to call his weakness, but Camille Desmoulins, who was also excluded by each so-called patriotic society for having advocated these new doctrines, made no reply. His gloom announced that he already foresaw the fate awaiting him, and the few words that he uttered

were always inquiries or observations on the sentences of the Revolutionary Tribunal, on the kind of death inflicted on the condemned, and on the most dignified and decorous way of preparing for and enduring it. His presentiment was soon realised. He was included by Saint-Just in the indictment of Danton and his party, although no appearance even of complicity justified that strange combination, and he was brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal. He was astonished, he says, to find himself associated with rogues, and made a strange and impious reply, but one which is characteristic of the times,* to the interrogatory of the President, who asked him his age. He went to the scaffold in the same tumbril with Danton.

I have still to speak of Robespierre. I saw him, as I have already said, once only. Elegant in dress, carefully curled and powdered, composed in manner, he formed the most curious contrast with the disorder, affected neglect, and coarseness that appeared in the attire and manners of his colleagues. His deportment was grave, and he took hardly any part in the conversation, speaking only now and then a few sententious words. But notwithstanding the immobility of his pale and sinister countenance, it was evident that he did not feel at his ease, and

* Camille Desmoulins replied: "I am of the age of that good sans-culotte Jesus—thirty-three years."

I learned afterwards that he owed a grudge to Deforgues for having thrown him into the company of men whom he pretended to regard as very uncertain patriots, or what was still more criminal in his eyes, as "Moderates." Thus the conversation at dinner was constrained. I also thought I could perceive by the few words uttered by Robespierre that he especially desired to be distinguished as a great statesman. He spoke of the foreign relations of France, of the necessity of extending them and of making a fresh alliance with Switzerland. He had already made some enquiries in the Foreign Department on the latter subject, and I recollect that M. Colchen, who was at the head of the division of the Ministry which includes the Swiss Confederation, received with no little alarm an invitation to a conference at the Minister's at which Robespierre was to be present. I recall this anecdote only to show that even at this period Robespierre flattered himself he might become the head of the Government, and that his ambition was to acquire the reputation of a statesman and great politician.

After this digression, I resume the thread of my narrative. But before continuing, I would remark that the beginning of the Republican Era having been fixed at September 22, 1792, the second year of the Republic commenced on September 22, 1793, and, dating from that period, the use of the vulgar

era was interdicted.* Therefore all dates that I shall mention will be according to the New Era, and I shall merely indicate the years of the Old Calendar to which they refer. I shall follow this plan until January 1, 1806, when the Republican Era was abolished and the use of the Gregorian Calendar restored.

I passed the remainder of the year 1793 (the early part of year II.) in discharging the duties of Secretary-General at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and I took advantage of the frequent leisure which my post afforded, at a time when we had scarcely any dealings with Foreign Powers, to examine the archives of my department, and to extract from them knowledge of a kind which up to that time I had had no opportunity of acquiring. This period of tranquillity, which I owed to my obscure position, did not last long. Danton, accused on Germinal 12, year II. (April 1, 1794), by the Committee of Public Safety, of which Saint-Just was the reporter, had been arrested on the preceding day. Being brought five days later before the Revolutionary Tribunal, his head fell on the scaffold (Germinal 16).

* As the New Calendar was not decreed until several weeks after September 22, 1793, the 'Moniteur,' counting from October 16 of that year, is dated the second month of the Republic, and only from October 31 by the new names of the months. The first of these new dates, Decadi, Brumaire, year II., heads the 'Moniteur' of October 31, 1793.

The fall of Danton was soon followed by that of Deforgues. He was arrested, and until the Commissions which were to take the place of the Executive Council, and that of the Ministers who had been suppressed by a decree of Germinal 12 should be established, the Convention appointed Hermann to succeed him. That provisional Minister did not, however, appear at the Office of Foreign Affairs; the new Commissioners were appointed soon after. (Germinal 29, year II., April 18, 1794).

The "Commissioner of Exterior Relations," a denomination substituted for that of Minister of Foreign Affairs, arrived to take possession of that department. This Commissioner's name was Buchot. He came from the Department of the Jura, where he had been a schoolmaster in a small town. His ignorance, his bad manners, his stupidity surpassed anything that can be imagined. During five months that he was at the head of the department, he did not occupy himself with it in the least, and indeed was incapable of so doing. The heads of divisions had abandoned the idea of working with him; he neither saw them nor asked for them; he was never to be found in his Cabinet, and when it was absolutely necessary to obtain his signature for the purpose of legalising documents—he had reduced his functions to this act alone—he had to be fetched from the billiard-table at the Café Hardy, where he generally passed

his days. On the other hand, apathetic as he was in business, Buchot was fatally active when called upon to second the bloodthirstiness of Robespierre's party, who had appointed him because he was a friend of the President of the Revolutionary Tribunal; and it was not long before the effects of the hatred he bore to my colleagues and to me became apparent. When Robespierre, threatened by a section of the Convention, multiplied the number of victims whom he sacrificed each day in order to diminish the number of his enemies, Buchot denounced us as "Moderates," who could not too quickly be got rid of. On 8th Thermidor, year II. (July 27, 1794), he obtained a warrant for the arrest of Otto, Colchen, Reinhart, and myself, from the Committee of General Safety. The next morning, Buchot, with a devilish smile, announced our fate to me, and went out to defend Robespierre's interests at the Commune. But it was the 9th Thermidor! We were saved, although on the following day, notwithstanding the events of the 9th, an attempt was made to enforce the warrant of arrest. This decree, with a great many others of the same kind, had passed in due course through the office of the Committee of General Safety, which had proceeded to carry it out. In fact it was only through the solicitations of M. Humbert, the chief of the Finance Department of our office, that we obtained the revocation of the sentence, and, free from

fear, could share in the universal joy displayed throughout Paris when the fall of the monsters who had enslaved France and drenched her in blood became known. M. Otto only, in consequence of a further denunciation, was arrested a few weeks after.*

For some months after the 9th Thermidor, the National Convention, engaged in destroying the remnant of a party whose head only had been wounded, did not set about re-establishing order in the public administration. The Commissioners who had succeeded the Ministers continued to occupy their places, and we beheld the reappearance of Buchot! He was somewhat humbler and less formidable, but no less incapable. At the end of year. II. (September 1794) the offices of the Ministry of Exterior Relations were removed from Rue Cerutti (now Rue Lafitte), where they had been established, to the Hotel Gallifet in the Rue du Bac.

At last, the Committee of Public Safety of the National Convention, which held the reins of Govern-

* M. Otto was taken to the Luxembourg Prison, but he remained there only a short time, and the suspicions which had led to this act of severity were quickly dispelled. Deforgues, who was much attached to him, was released from the same prison after the 9th Thermidor. He worked with the greatest zeal to obtain the liberty of his companion in misfortune. I was luckily able to assist him in his efforts, and we succeeded in procuring an order of release from the Committee of General Safety, armed with which we went to fetch M. Otto from the Luxembourg at five in the morning.

ment, was brought by the force of circumstances to ideas of order, and felt the necessity for a reform of the public administration, which was completely disorganised by revolutionary excesses, by the internal divisions of the Assembly, and by the incapacity of the lately-appointed officials. The Government, anxious to assume a more dignified attitude towards the European Powers, showed a disposition to listen to the overtures of peace, which the astonishing victories of the French army had induced some of the Foreign Cabinets to make privately. In this new phase of the public mind, it was impossible to leave the Commission of Exterior Relations in the abject and absurd state to which its ridiculous chief had allowed it to sink. MM. Otto, Colchen, Reinhart and myself, were therefore summoned before the Committee of Public Safety early in Brumaire, year III. Four members of the Committee had been ordered to hold a conference with each of us, in which we were to pass a kind of examination. Merlin (of Douai), Cambacérès, Thuriot and another, whose name I do not recollect, had been selected. I fell to the share of Thuriot.

He put questions to me as to my antecedents, asked me whether I had passed through a regular course of study, and knew Latin, and he appeared pleased when I told him I was acquainted with that language, and that I had also learned some others,

viz., Italian, English and German. After this interrogatory, which lasted half an hour, he informed me that the Committee of Public Safety intended to propose to the Convention that the "Department of Exterior Relations" should be so organised as to enable it to carry on certain political negotiations which had been already opened, and that he had thought of me as successor to the present Commissioner, whose incapacity was generally acknowledged.* We then parted, and on rejoining my colleagues I found that they had undergone much the same sort of examination.

The results of this singular conference were not long delayed; by a decree of the Convention dated 18th Brumaire, year III. (November 8, 1794), I was appointed Commissioner of Exterior Relations. MM. Otto, Colchen and Reinhart were specially attached to the Committee of Public Safety. They were to attend to details, as well as to diplomatic correspondence, and I took up my abode in the offices to which, as I have said before, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had been transferred two months previously.

These various changes had taken place without the knowledge of Buchot, who learned them from a newspaper which he bought in the street on that evening. I nevertheless called upon him on

* This awkward appellation was substituted for that of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which was subsequently restored.

the day after my nomination, and treated him with the courtesy usual on such occasions. This, however, he seemed to appreciate but little. He only told me that he should be much inconvenienced if I insisted on his immediately vacating the apartments he occupied at the Hotel of the Commission. I assured him that, as I had no intention of sleeping there, he was at liberty to remain until he had provided himself with another residence. He thanked me, and said that the Committee had done well in appointing me, but that it was very unpleasant for him to have been brought to Paris, obliged to give up his profession in the country, and afterwards left in the lurch. And then he took it into his head to ask me for a place in my office! I tried to make him understand that it would be the height of indecorum on his part to accept a secondary post in a department of which he had once been the head. He thought such a scruple very extraordinary, and finding that I hesitated to give an affirmative reply, he said that in the event of my not finding him capable of filling the place of clerk, which he was soliciting, he would be satisfied with that of office-boy. I felt ashamed to witness such meanness, and, after a few vague excuses, I left him. He continued to sleep at the Hotel for about a week, but I did not see him again. One morning I was told that he had not come in on the previous evening,

and that he had removed his property. I am ignorant of what happened to him afterwards; he was an extraordinary character; the most singular mixture of baseness, ignorance and ferocity that can be imagined.

The organisation of the Department of Exterior Relations being decided on, as I have previously stated, a satisfactory activity set in. I worked systematically with the Committee of Public Safety, which at that time consisted of men to whom, whatever we may think of their political conduct in the course of the Revolution, we cannot deny the possession of great ability. Among these are Merlin (of Douai), Cambacérès, Sieyès, Fourcroy, Boissy d'Anglas, Carnot, and others. I endeavoured to renew our foreign relations, so far as the isolation in which the coalition of all the Powers against France had placed her rendered it possible to do so. Consuls were despatched to all countries where there was a hope of their being received. A circular letter addressed to the agents of the Republic abroad, instructed them to regard enquiries into the state of science, of art, and of social progress in general, in the countries where they exercised their functions, as one of their first duties. The famous Volney, with whom I became intimate at that time, and who honoured me with his friendship until his death, drew up at my request a series of questions on political economy, which I forwarded to those agents, and

the answers conveyed to us a tolerably accurate idea of the peoples among whom they dwelt.* I ordered foreign publications and newspapers to be sent to me, and formed a plan of founding a library and reading-room on the premises of the Foreign Office, which should be available for all who might choose to come to these for information. Translators paid by the Government would assist persons ignorant of the original languages in their researches.

The Committee of Public Safety supported my views, and readily accepted the propositions that I laid before it. We were then endeavouring to emerge from the abyss of anarchy, and it would be unjust not to acknowledge the efforts of the Committee to re-establish order, and to restore France, if I may so express it, to Europe, whence she had been in a manner exiled. Although surrounded by dangers which were the work of the still smouldering factions, and which on the 12th Germinal, 3rd Prairial, year III., and 13th Vendémiaire, year IV. (April, May, and October, 1795), threatened it with overthrow; in constant alarm on account of the famine that was laying Paris waste, and making a popular rising immi-

* These questions, which are a model of precision and sagacity, were published in Nivôse, year III. (January 1795), together with the Circular Letter that accompanied them. They form a small volume in 18mo., now rather scarce.

ment; obliged to supply the enormous necessities of fourteen armies, so as to enable them to consolidate their first triumphs and obtain fresh successes; finally, although hampered in all its movements, and suspected in all its purposes, the Committee did not flinch from the burden, but evinced the most astonishing activity and the most unwavering fidelity—I will not say to the confidence reposed in it by the public (neither the nation nor even the Convention honoured it with any), but to the greatness of the task imposed on it by destiny. History bears witness that during the administration of the Committee which lasted over a year, from the 9th Thermidor, year II. (July 28, 1794), until the establishment of the Constitution of year III. in the month of Vendémiaire, year IV. (October 1795), France was victorious everywhere; and if not respected abroad, she was at least feared, for during that interval several foreign cabinets solicited peace, and so far sacrificed their pride as to treat with a Republic that they had openly scorned.

The negotiations entered into by the Committee of Public Safety came to a speedy and prosperous issue. Count Carletti, Envoy from the Grand Duke of Tuscany, came to Paris to negotiate a renewal of neutrality between the French Republic and Tuscany. The treaty of peace concluded by this

Minister with the Committee of Public Safety was ratified by the National Convention on 25th Pluviôse, year III. (February 13, 1795), on being reported by Richard.*

Another more important treaty was signed shortly afterwards (16th Germinal, year III., April, 5, 1795), between Prussia and France. Holland, Spain, and the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel also recognised and treated with the Republic in the course of the same year.†

With the exception of the treaty with Tuscany, which, as I have said, was negotiated at Paris, directly, between Count Carletti and the Committee of Public Safety, the others were negotiated and signed at Bâle by the French Ambassador, M. Barthélemy, according to instructions from the Committee. The negotiations entrusted to this diplomatist were conducted with all the skill he had acquired in his long experience of affairs; but they did not present the difficulties that might have been expected in first transactions of this kind between a Government quite recently established, and long-existing powers which had but lately shown so deep an aversion to the doctrines on which it was

* The treaty itself bears date 21st Pluviôse (February 9).

† Holland on 27th Floréal (May 15); Spain, 4th Thermidor (July 22); the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, 11th Fructidor (August 28), year III. (1795).

founded. It is certain, I have had opportunities of ascertaining the fact, that the advances were not made by the Republic, but that, on the contrary, all the preliminary steps were taken by the foreign cabinets. Two powerful motives induced the latter to hasten the conclusion of peace; first, the fear of bringing troops full of enthusiasm, elated by a long succession of victories, and whom no obstacle seemed able to stop, on their territory; and secondly, the dread that the principles professed by these troops, and which rendered them so formidable, might penetrate into the heart of the ancient political constitutions of Europe, carrying with them the germs of revolution.

The third year of the Republic may then be justly considered as one of the most brilliant in the history of the nation. During the course of this single year France, victorious within, over the tyranny of Robespierre and the revolutionary madness, closed the den of the Jacobins, made for herself a constitution in which, although it had imperfections that might have easily been removed, the first principles of the balance of power were laid down, and a regular Government, offering such sufficient guarantees that other Governments no longer feared to treat with her, was established. Abroad, she regained a high degree of political consideration, made peace with enemies hitherto

bent on her ruin, imposed severe conditions on them, and herself submitted to none that could lower her dignity. Finally, she carried her arms into the neighbouring countries, while she no longer suffered a single foreign soldier to tread her soil. Everything promised a great and lasting prosperity for her in the future; but the rulers whom the Constitution of year III. placed at her head possessed neither ability nor worth; and when, five years later, she repudiated that constitution, the nation, dazzled with glory, heedlessly adopted institutions which, as they deviated completely from her professed principles and rested on no solid basis, were speedily overthrown.

Victory alone was for long years faithful to France, and it dazzled her; but her glory was bought at the heavy price of the loss of liberty.

CHAPTER III.

The Author is appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to the Grand Duke of Tuscany—The 12th Germinal—The Author embarks at Marseilles for Genoa, and proceeds from thence to Florence—Report to the Committee of Public Safety on the political state of Florence—Difficulties caused by the presence of the French *Émigrés* at Leghorn, and by the ill-will of the Tuscan authorities towards the Republic—General Buonaparte appointed to the command of the army of Italy—Opening of the campaign and series of victories obtained by the young General—The Governments of Italy take steps towards obtaining peace—The Author determines to proceed to Buonaparte's headquarters.

THE re-establishment of political relations between France and several of the European Powers, and an impulse of greater activity given to those which had not been entirely broken off, with Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, and the United States; had once more thrown open the career of diplomacy.

I was only thirty-two years of age; I was longing for knowledge, for travel; I desired therefore to obtain a diplomatic post, and the Committee of Public Safety showed itself willing to accede to

my wishes. I was permitted to choose between the mission to Florence and that to the United States. My tastes led me to select the former.

On 9th Pluviôse, year III. (February 6, 1795), I was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of the Grand Duke of Tuscany. The decree of the Committee of Public Safety containing my nomination is signed by Cambacérès, Merlin (of Douai), Maret, Pelet, Carnot, A. Dumont, Fourcroy, Boissy d'Anglas, Chazal and Dubois de Crancé. M. Fréville* was appointed Secretary of Legation, and M. Finet, a painter, was at my request nominated to reside with me at Florence. In his capacity as an artist he was to negotiate an exchange of pictures between the two Governments, to their mutual advantage.

Meanwhile the Grand Duke published throughout his States, on March 1, 1795, the treaty of peace he had just concluded with France, and despatched letters accrediting Count Carletti to the functions of Minister Plenipotentiary in Paris. M. Carletti was solemnly received in that character by the Convention on 28th Ventôse (March 17), and the minutes of this extraordinary sitting are recorded in French and also in Italian at the National Printing Office. This was the first political triumph obtained by the Republic.

* He died at Paris, a Councillor of State and a Peer of France.

M. Colchen succeeded me a few days later as Commissioner of External Relations, and my letter of credit, together with my instructions, were handed to me on the 9th Germinal (March 24).

All being thus in order, I was preparing to start, when a fresh disturbance threatening the Convention led me to postpone my journey, in order that I might observe its tendency and effects.

The remnant of Robespierre's faction was still active, and as the conduct of the Committee of Public Safety deprived that party of all hope of regaining power in the Assembly, whether by eloquent speech, or by influence over men's minds, it attempted, by an insurrectionary movement, to lay forcible hands on the authority of which the 9th Thermidor had deprived it. Numerous bodies of armed men, delegated by various sections, forced their way into the hall of Assembly during the session of the 12th Germinal (April 1), shouting loudly for bread, for the constitution of 1793, and for the release of the patriots, viz., Collot d'Herbois, Billaud-Varennés and others, who had been arrested some time previously. The Assembly maintained its tranquillity during this attack; Boissy d'Anglas, especially, distinguished himself by the courageous firmness which was afterwards put to a terrible test.

At length the Assembly passed a decree at this memorable sitting, which lasted until six o'clock in

the morning, ordering the immediate transportation of Collot d'Herbois, Billaud-Varennes, Barrère and Vadier; and the arrest of several members of the Convention, including Chaudieu, Leonard Bourdon, and others. Pichegru, who then appeared for the first time on the political stage, was entrusted with the command of Paris, and the city was declared to be in a state of siege. Numerous patrols perambulated the streets of the capital during the night, and I myself made part of the patrol ordered by the "Section" in which I resided. In spite of some opposition, immediately quelled, the decree of the Convention was carried out. Collot d'Herbois and Billaud-Varennes left for Rochefort, and were sent thence to Sinnamari. Two days later, perfect quiet was restored. Feeling convinced that, after this success, public tranquillity would not again be disturbed for a long time to come—a conviction that shortly afterwards unfortunately proved to be unfounded—and having nothing to detain me in Paris, I began my journey to Italy on the 20th Germinal, year III. (April 9, 1795).

As the war in which France was then engaged against Austria and the King of Sardinia precluded me from travelling through Upper Italy, I proceeded to Marseilles, whence I embarked for Genoa. We were obliged to put into harbour at San Remo, and I performed part of my journey on horseback,

crossing the outposts of our army of Italy. This army, which was destined to accomplish such great deeds, was at that time very weak. The troops occupied difficult posts in the mountains, where they were subjected to the greatest privations. But they endured them with the most admirable resignation, and prepared by heroic patience for the glory that was soon to immortalise them. I found Kellermann at Alassio, he had come to take command of the place; and also my countryman Berthier, with whom I had been intimate from my youth and who had been appointed chief of the Staff. After having consulted with both as to the means of carrying on a correspondence, and on the services which the diplomatic post I was about to occupy would enable me to render to the army, I took my leave and proceeded to Genoa, whence I despatched a felucca to Leghorn with my luggage, and I continued my route on horseback by the banks of the Levanto. At last, having thus made my way through Larici, Sarzano, and Pisa, where I found my luggage, I arrived at Florence on the 1st Prairial, year III. (May 28, 1795). I had passed nearly six weeks on the journey; but I had profited by the opportunity of visiting Nîmes and its antiquities, and the bridge over the Gardon, and I had passed a few days at Genoa and Pisa, where many objects worthy of a traveller's attention had detained me. Freed from

the terrible agitation of our political troubles, I took a great deal of pleasure in this journey, although anxiety as to what was taking place in Paris, the grievous reports that were prevalent, and the news, true or false, that reached me at every moment, rendered me frequently indifferent to the ever-varying spectacle before my eyes. In this respect, however, I was but serving an apprenticeship to the arduous position in which I was about to find myself in a foreign land, amid a people where, in consequence of our excesses, every man was our enemy ; where we met with no sympathy in our misfortunes, no excuse for faults or crimes whose perpetrators were abhorred, while the victims were not pitied, and no justice was shown towards those who had punished the guilty.

Notwithstanding the manifestation of hostile feeling, which was carefully encouraged by the French *émigrés* residing at Pisa and Leghorn, the news of the neutrality re-established between France and the Grand Duke had been received with universal satisfaction in Tuscany. Even the English, although they affected displeasure, in reality regarded this event with inward satisfaction. It rendered them, in a manner, masters of the port of Leghorn, where by reason of the neutrality they could land without fear. English merchants felt they possessed a guarantee for their property which was denied them in a state of war, when at any moment French

troops might enter Tuscany. Moreover, the English, as masters of the sea and possessors of Corsica, had nothing to fear from our feeble navy; and our privateers, which were almost the only vessels that hoisted the national flag in those seas, were in greater danger than ever.

The English, in fact, blockaded the entrance of the port with their men-of-war, and it was the only place of safety for our privateers; even there they barely found means of escape from enemies who had the upper hand at Leghorn, and did not respect the neutrality of a feeble prince. Finally, the population of Leghorn, and even its authorities, were entirely devoted to the English, who felt certain beforehand of impunity for the numerous breaches of neutrality which they committed. In everything, therefore, the advantage was on the side of our enemies.

These inferences I drew from the particulars first given to me by M. Fréville. He had preceded me into Tuscany by some weeks, and had come to meet me at Pisa. In the end I was fully convinced that he had not been mistaken in his estimate of the situation.

After the first few days, which were taken up with the delivery of my letters of credit, with my presentation at Court, and the duties imposed by etiquette, against which I was careful not to offend, in order to show that I was anxious to conform to

the customs of the country, I began to investigate matters for myself.

During about a month's stay at Florence and a few days at Leghorn, the observations I made were sufficient to enable me to form a tolerably precise opinion, which I communicated to the Committee of Public Safety. The events of the 3rd Prairial, year III., which as I had learned on the 13th (May 22, 1795) established the triumph of the National Convention, had endowed the Provisional Government of France with steadiness and confidence it had not hitherto possessed, and its heads felt the necessity, with a view to the execution of their plans, of learning what was the true position of Italy, towards which their eyes were turned, the principles of the first government with which they had treated, and the character of those who directed it. I took every pains to satisfy curiosity so well founded, and the following is nearly what I wrote on the subject to the Committee of Public Safety, 20th Messidor, year III. (July 8, 1795).

“ After the famous era of the Florentine Republic, Tuscany had been erected into a Grand Duchy under the sceptre of the descendants of the Medicis, and was scarcely distinguishable from the other secondary States of Italy, until Peter-Leopold gave her a more important part to play. Considering this prince in his capacity as a Grand Duke, we cannot but

recognise in him an enlightened ruler. The wisdom of his commercial regulations, his efforts to reduce the authority of the nobles, and to restore to the middle classes of society the influence they had lost, prepared a happier existence for Tuscany than she had enjoyed during the reign of his predecessor. But while for these reasons he won the approbation of enlightened men, he was in the highest degree displeasing to the class whose privileges and prejudices he attacked. Meanwhile his absolute authority, the unsparing rigour with which he used it when necessary, and the strength afforded him by his great popularity, were sufficient so stifle every germ of discontent.

“The death of Joseph II. and the French Revolution brought about a new order of things. Leopold reigned in Vienna, and as Emperor seemed to forget or to repudiate the principles he had professed as Grand Duke. His accession to the Imperial throne, and his death, which took place very soon afterwards, caused the government of Tuscany to devolve on his second son, Ferdinand III., then hardly more than a youth, and the pupil of the Marquis de Manfredini, to whose care his father had confided him.

“The retrograde movement of the Emperor Leopold, in declaring himself against the French Revolution, became an occasion of triumph to the class he had kept down in Tuscany. His government and his laws

were attacked, his memory was insulted, and a party antagonistic to the system he had established was soon formed. The influence of Manfredini and the inertia natural to a government which was opposed to all violent measures, had the advantage in the struggle with this party; but eventually, assisted by the *émigrés*, and by English influence, it succeeded in pushing Tuscany into the coalition against France, an imprudent step which nearly caused her ruin.

“French victories, the counsels of Manfredini, and still more, perhaps, the tendency to inaction natural to the country, soon made the danger of so impolitic a rupture evident. Peace was solicited, and France acquiesced.

“But it would be a great mistake to suppose that this reconciliation was the result of friendly feeling, or of any similarity of principle. All that I have said proves the contrary. Fear has done it all. There exists but one man here, whose actions seem to be dictated by wider views, by philosophic ideas, and by a general philanthropy. That man is Manfredini.

“He is attached to the principles of Leopold's government, and although perhaps he is not at one with him as to the means of carrying them out, he seems to take a pride in maintaining his system. He has hitherto retained great ascendancy over the mind of his pupil, and I must do Ferdinand III. the justice to say that he is himself disposed to follow

the path traced out by Manfredini. Meanwhile the opposite party, taking advantage of the youth and inexperience of the Prince, acquire fresh strength every day, and while waiting until they may venture openly to attack Manfredini, they seek stealthily by every means to weaken his authority and diminish the respect in which he is held.

“Leopold’s plans have already been abandoned in many respects. The laws on the freedom of trade have been modified; poverty in the country districts and dearness of provisions, the result of the restrictions on trade, are already beginning to be felt. There is a project for restoring the penalty of death which was suppressed by the code of 1774. The power of the priests, which had been considerably restricted by means of wise regulations, is again springing up. The men employed by Leopold have been set aside. In a word, this country, which has latterly made such strides towards philosophical ideas and a better government, and which has even, in that respect, outstripped other nations, is now evidently falling back, and ready once more to take up the yoke of prejudice, from which the genius of one man had delivered it.

“Manfredini is a witness of these ill-starred innovations, but he either makes no effort to arrest them or he feels himself powerless to do so. I am strongly of opinion that it is in order to secure the triumph of

his opinions as regards neutrality, that he has thought it well to yield on other points. If I am not mistaken in this conjecture, he has committed, I apprehend, a great blunder. He should have taken up his position on the basis of Leopold's government, and should have deduced the maintenance of neutrality as a consequence from it. By relinquishing that basis, he gives a great advantage to his enemies. He will be imperceptibly drawn into measures entirely opposed to his own views, and it will afterwards be easy to overthrow him, when surrounded only by the ruins of a government which was the safeguard of his reputation and political existence.

"It is quite true that Ferdinand would be unwilling to part with Manfredini. The habit of consulting him in everything, which public esteem has justified, makes him necessary to the Prince. Moreover Ferdinand, although gifted, so far as I have been able to judge, with an upright mind, simple in his habits, much better brought up and better informed than men of his rank in general, is perhaps more averse than any one else to the measures pressed upon him, and of all persons that one to whom they would be most repugnant. Consequently he seems to me to be thought little of by the nobles, and though he is one of the most estimable men whom I have met with here, I have not heard a single word in his praise. But with all these qualities he is young,

and the fears that may be instilled into him for the security of his power, amid the events that are now disturbing Europe, must react on him, and weaken the opposition to the proposed innovations to which his education and his natural character would urge him.

“On the other hand, it seems to me equally impossible that he should entirely release himself from the influence of the Emperor, and certainly the Cabinet of Vienna is not in accord with Manfredini. The hopes of the latter—he did not conceal them from me—were to bring back the Emperor to his former principles, and to make Tuscany mediate for peace between Austria and the French Republic. The steps latterly taken at Vienna, the alliance between Russia and England, the subsidies granted by the last-named Power; finally, the report that has got abroad, that the overtures of such a negotiation, if there is to be one, would take place at Basel, have wrecked Manfredini’s hopes, and consequently lessened his influence, which such a negotiation, if crowned with success, would have raised higher than ever.

“I shall not discuss the question whether France should desire or dread the realisation of Manfredini’s ideas. My immediate concern is with the consequences to the Government of Tuscany that may ensue from all these facts.

"It is evident that the present conjuncture is favourable to that numerous party who are hostile to the system of government adopted by Leopold, and who will make every effort to turn it to their own advantage. That party will therefore intrigue with the object of influencing the selection of a Prime Minister, whose functions comprise those of the department of Foreign Affairs, and whose place may be said to have been vacant for a long time past, for Senator Serristori who occupies it is a mere figure-head. The post, however, must soon become actually vacant through his death or retirement.

Manfredini, having hitherto directed the action of the Government, without official title, has made no change in the Ministry. He has restricted himself to preparing beforehand a man whom he can trust as a successor to Serristori. Neri-Corsini,* at present Secretary of State, is named for that office. He belongs to an illustrious family; he is young, and never having left Italy, his experience and his knowledge of affairs seem to me limited to the ancient ways of the astute policy that has always prevailed in the Cabinets of this country. Being connected

* Since then he has been Councillor of State in France, where I found him when, in 1813, I resumed my place in the Council of State. He was, like myself, a member of the Interior Section. We little thought, in 1795, at Florence, that we should be colleagues eighteen years later.

with the aristocracy, both by family interests and by birth, he seems to me to be widely divided from us in principles; but he acts with dissimulation, and lets his real sentiments appear as little as possible. Nevertheless it is plain that Manfredini has but an ungrateful pupil in this young man, one greatly inclined to go over to the side of his enemies if their party prevails.

“ Corsini is aware that in such an event he need not aspire to the post now destined for him. He feels that, strictly speaking, he might be able to fill it under the tutelage of Manfredini, but that, left to himself, he could not sustain its weight, and that his youth alone would be a sufficient reason for excluding him. Such a competitor being therefore by no means formidable, the eyes of this political party would turn, after the overthrow of Manfredini, towards Signor Francesco Serrati, the present Governor of Leghorn, who, by reason of his age, his gravity, the importance of the posts he has filled and the reputation he has acquired, may at any moment be invested not only with the title but with the actual functions of Prime Minister; may succeed to Manfredini in the direction of affairs, and may even exercise, though in an opposite sense, equal influence in the general administration of the State.”

Such was the situation of the Tuscan Government,

and such the view of it that I sought to impress upon the Committee of Public Safety, by insisting on the indispensable necessity of serious attention to the war in Italy, which until then had been almost disregarded. It will be seen hereafter that I was not greatly mistaken in my judgment, in the results I foretold, and in the nature of the remedy. But in the meantime I had serious difficulties to overcome, for it is evident that until we had acquired the upper hand in Italy by force of arms, we should possess neither the security of neutrality nor the advantages of conquest. Every prejudice had been aroused against us. The nobles, whose privileges and influence were attacked by the spread of our doctrines, bore us an ill-concealed hatred; the people, excited by the priests, and also, it must be confessed, by the violent speeches and odious calumnies of the *émigrés*, were ready, at a word, to rush into the greatest excesses against the French, and many of our countrymen have fallen victims to their fury, on occasions when it could be vented with impunity.

Amid the hostile feelings prevailing among the two extremes of society, my arrival at Florence had caused a sensation and excited malevolent curiosity. The strangest rumours had preceded me. People expected to see a sort of savage, clothed in an extraordinary manner, using the coarsest lan-

guage, having no idea of the rules of society, and ready ostentatiously to violate them. My habits, my mode of life, the deference to the customs of the country I was scrupulous to show, and the care with which I respected even its prejudices, soon dispelled these first impressions; I was even received by the middle and most cultivated class of its inhabitants, and by men of letters, artists and men of science, such as Fontana, Fossombroni, Fabbroni, Galuzzi, &c., more favourably than I had ventured to expect. I must, however, except Alfieri, who was then in Tuscany, where he lived on terms of great intimacy with Madame d'Albany.* It is well known that this remarkable genius—one of the most illustrious writers of Italy, who displayed in his work on Tyranny an ardent hatred of despotism, and was one of the warmest apologists of the French Revolution—taking offence at the severity of the decrees of the Constituent Assembly which attacked Madame d'Albany's property, and disgusted probably by the excesses which subsequently dishonoured the cause of liberty, had entirely changed his opinions. He bitterly hated the whole French nation and had

* Madame d'Albany was the widow of one of the last descendants of the Stuarts. Of that House, so celebrated for its misfortunes, there now remained only the Cardinal of York, whom I met at Rome. On his death, the Stuart family became completely extinct.

expressed his enmity in most insulting verse. I should have liked to have made the acquaintance of a man of such remarkable talent, in the hope of gradually overcoming an enmity which passed the bounds of reason and justice; but he was too inflexible to yield, and after some overtures, which he rejected, I abstained with regret from any further effort.

Meanwhile, although my conduct and my domestic life had, on becoming known, removed the popular prejudice against me, political opinion had not altered, and in proportion as I progressed in the management of affairs, it became more and more adverse. Leghorn was almost daily the scene of contests between the *émigrés* and the little band of Republicans whom trade or privateering brought to the town. Some Frenchmen, taken prisoners by the English,* who had carried them to Leghorn, were insulted and wounded during an altercation which arose between them and the *émigrés*. The populace, being friendly to the English, encouraged these acts of violence, and the Tuscan Government, fearing to compromise itself, had acted towards the guilty persons with reprehensible supineness. My first care, therefore, was to prevent the recurrence of these deplorable quarrels, by demanding the expulsion of

* These prisoners were part of the crew of the men-of-war the *Ça-ira* and the *Censeur*.

those who, regardless of the tranquillity of the country which had given them hospitality, were continually bringing it into difficulties, and at the same time were wanting in every sentiment of generosity towards the brave soldiers whose misfortunes should have excited the sympathy of their countrymen. Their banishment, on which I insisted, was in the interest of the Grand Duke and of the *émigrés* themselves. The latter would have found a more peaceful retreat in other parts of Tuscany, and the Government, by appointing the interior of the country for their residence, would have avoided a continual subject of complaints and recriminations, which constantly compromised it with France, and in the end brought down the arms of the Republic on Leghorn.

The most evident self-interest counselled them to follow so reasonable a course, and yet Ferdinand's Ministers would not adopt it. Our armies, detained in the Riviera of Genoa, had not yet entered Italy. Not being worked on by fear, the Ministry stuck to the tortuous and evasive policy, generally adopted by Italian cabinets. They made promises only to break them; they replied to complaints by other complaints; accusations were met with rival accusations; they extended impunity to those who were guilty of the excesses I had denounced, while they demanded the punishment of a few Frenchmen ac-

cused by the Tuscan Government. I went myself to Leghorn to ascertain the real state of things, so as to be on my guard against the exaggerated reports brought to me, but my journey was almost in vain. The only thing of which I convinced myself was that Signor Serrati, Governor of Leghorn, was an open enemy of France. In the very warm discussions which I had with him relative to the affair of the French prisoners to which I have previously alluded, his partiality for our enemies was discernible through his affected assurances of sincere respect for neutrality. He was opposed to all the measures that I had proposed, and I returned to Florence convinced that we should not obtain any satisfaction, so long as my demands were not sustained by dread of our arms. But the time was approaching when the irresistible strength of victory was to display itself, and the Tuscan Government to perceive too late that its ill-disguised partiality had aroused so much resentment, that it could no longer hope to save itself from the torrent which was about to be let loose on Italy.

The events of the 13th Vendémiaire, year IV. (October 5, 1795), had placed on the political stage a man who was to fill the whole of Europe with his name in less than three years. Buonaparte, who was called to the defence of the National Convention against the combined sections which menaced it, had

triumphed easily over the brave but undisciplined crowd led by its ignorant chiefs. The importance rather than the merit of his success had drawn public attention to him; and when the constitution of year III. placed a Directory composed of five members at the head of the Government, Barras, one of the five, who had put forward the young General during the days of Vendémiaire, either through gratitude or because he recognised his genius, occupied himself with his fortunes, arranged a marriage between him and Madame de Beauharnais, and, six months later, gave him the command of the army of Italy.

This post was not a popular one. The army of Italy, the smallest of all those we had in action, was least fit for action.* Scherez—one of the most incapable of French generals—who succeeded Kellermann, had been attacked and beaten by the Austrian General De Vins. Obligated to evacuate Vado,† his communications with Genoa were cut off, and when by some subsequent successes he regained the line, he did not know how to profit by it to penetrate into the plain, but remained in complete inaction. The French, hemmed in between the coast and the mountains, unable to get supplies

* At the end of year III., and the beginning of year IV. (six last months of 1795).

† In the month of Messidor, year III. (July 1795).

except by sea—an uncertain and often a dangerous method—could scarcely hold their difficult position, by dint of valour and endurance, against the attacks of an enemy now elated by success. Already people imagined us driven hopelessly from the frontier of Italy, which we had not dared to pass, and fancied the Austrians on the point of invading our Southern Departments. The inimical Governments of Rome and Naples, emboldened by our reverses at Vado, took an active part in the war, and furnished both men and money to our enemy. Venice and Genoa, who had remained neutral, were vacillating, and sought to obtain pardon for not having joined the coalition, by using their neutrality in the service of Austria. Even Tuscany, which had just entered into a treaty with us, assumed an air of patronage, disdainfully deferred her replies to our just complaints, and appointed Signor Serrati as her Prime Minister, replacing him at Leghorn by Signor Spanocchi, formerly a naval captain in the service of Naples, regardless of the annoyance which appointments so disagreeable to us and so unfavourable to our interests must necessarily produce.

It was with an army apparently so little to be feared, it was with means so limited, and in presence of difficulties so great, that Buonaparte had to act. But he felt his own strength, his genius had already suggested a plan different from all those of the

commanders who had preceded him, and nothing was ever more admirable than the conception of that plan, unless indeed the astonishing rapidity with which he put it into execution.

Meanwhile the Executive Directory, which had sent me fresh letters of credit, signalised its accession to the Government of the Republic by energetic measures. It made known to me its intention of giving a fresh impulse to the war in Italy, and ordered me to support the generals of the army by every means in my power, and to assume a firm and threatening attitude towards the Government to which I was accredited. The Directory had dismissed M. Carletti, the Grand Duke's Minister, from Paris, because he had asked permission to visit the daughter of Louis XVI. The young Princess was on the point of leaving Paris for Vienna, and was to be exchanged at the frontier for the former Commissioners of the Convention, General Beurnonville, who had been arrested by Dumouriez in April 1793, and MM. de Semonville and Maret, who were made prisoners by Austria during the same year, while passing through Switzerland on their way to Constantinople as diplomatic agents of the Republic. The Grand Duke, alarmed by so decisive a proceeding, put up with it without venturing to complain, although deeply aggrieved ; and Carletti, censured by

* The 10th Frimaire, year IV. (December 1, 1795.)

his own Court for his imprudence, was succeeded at Paris by Neri-Corsini.* Without in reality approving the conduct of the Directory, who in this affair appeared to me to offend against all diplomatic custom, and to punish with uncalled-for severity a merely formal request which they might simply have refused, I could not but perceive that its stern action had inspired a salutary fear. If it did not make us loved—an impossibility, no matter what we did—at least it made us feared, and to some extent facilitated my dealings with the Tuscan Government. I took advantage of this state of feeling to obtain from the Government the refusal of free passage through Tuscan territory to the regiments sent by the Court of Naples to the Austrian army. During this negotiation, in which I was opposed by family interests,† I was ably seconded by M. Manfredini, who strongly urged the strict observance of neutrality. Of this they made a crime at Vienna, whither a copy had been sent of a letter I had written on the subject to Charles Lacroix, Minister of Foreign Affairs, containing an account of conversations between myself and Manfredini, in which the neutrality question had been discussed. This

* The new Minister arrived in Paris on the 15th Nivôse, year IV. (January 5, 1796). Carletti had already left, and reached Basel on the 7th Nivôse (December 28, 1795).

† The Grand Duchess was a daughter of the Queen of Naples.

copy, stolen from the bureaux of the Ministry in Paris by some treacherous person who was probably bribed, was used, as an act of accusation, against Manfredini, and he was obliged to go to Vienna to clear himself.*

The fears by which from time to time the Tuscan Government was swayed, were in themselves proof of its weakness. I in vain expected from it the firmness necessary to bring to an end the outrages of which Leghorn was so often the scene. Acts of violence against the French, incited in turns by the *émigrés*, the Neapolitans or the English, were constantly committed, and provoked the bitterest resentment, skilfully augmented by men who coveted her wealth, against the town. They ultimately succeeded in ruining Leghorn.

The war in Italy was assuming a formidable aspect. Buonaparte had arrived at Nice at the beginning of Germinal, year IV. (April 1796). I received a first letter from him, in which he announced that he was about to put the army in motion. At the same time he asked me to give him any information I could about the state of Italy. I saw at once by his style, which was concise and animated, although careless and incorrect, that he

* This took place in April 1796. He came back in May, and he assured me himself that he had seen the copy of the letter of which I speak.

was no ordinary man. I was struck with a breadth and depth of view on military and political subjects, such as I had not found in any correspondence which I had held up to that time with the generals of our army of Italy. I predicted, therefore, either great success or great reverses. My uncertainty did not last long. The campaign was opened, and a series of victories as dazzling as they were unexpected, succeeding each other with surprising quickness, raised the glory of our French soldiers, and that of the great captain who led them daily to fresh triumphs, to the highest.

It does not enter into the scope of this work to relate in detail the military events of that memorable campaign. The battles of Montenotte, of Millesimo, of Mondovi; the engagements at Dego and at St. Jean; the passage of the bridge of Lodi, are among the great facts of history; and their names, recalling so much valour, such deeds of daring, such a display of talent, genius so audacious in design, so fertile in resource, have become immortal. The news reached to the centre of Italy, and the bulletins giving descriptions of these wonderful deeds of our troops, at first contradicted, produced sheer bewilderment, when the force of truth convinced the most incredulous. Nothing was then thought of but how the torrent of war was to be turned away from regions it had not yet reached.

The victories of the French, the armistices concluded with the King of Sardinia, and the Dukes of Modena and Parma, and the occupation of the country round Milan, had disconcerted the policy of Upper Italy. I received more attention from the Cabinet of Florence than had yet been shown me. Notwithstanding Neri-Corsini's efforts to oppose it in Paris, notwithstanding his complaints of what he called my haughtiness, a proclamation was issued, ordering the *émigrés* to leave Leghorn, and this measure, which in reality did them a service, was carried out with all the consideration demanded by humanity and with the respect due to misfortune. Rome and Naples, especially the former of those two Powers, which was more exposed to immediate attack from the conqueror, began to take steps to obtain peace, or at least a suspension of hostilities. Prince Belmonte-Pignatelli, ambassador from Naples to the King of Spain, came to Florence with instructions from his Court to make the first advances to me. Count Manfredini introduced him, and begged me to second the steps he proposed to take with respect to the General Commander-in-Chief of the French army. As an armistice with Naples, of which one condition would be to close the ports of that kingdom against the English, and to withdraw the Neapolitan cavalry regiments from the Austrian army, seemed to me

advantageous both in a political and military point of view, I readily undertook to second the proposals of Prince Pignatelli, and I even promised to go myself to Buonaparte's headquarters to open the negotiation.

Apart from this motive, which was in itself sufficient to make me undertake the journey, I was resolved upon it for other reasons. It was important for me, with a view to the ordering of my future conduct, to know what political bent a general who had already assumed an almost independent authority, and was inclined rather to dictate orders to the Directory than to receive them, intended to give to our dealings with the various Powers of Italy. Did he intend to transform the conquered States into a Republic, as he was urged to do by all the numerous vehement Republicans who were beginning to make their voices heard throughout the country? Did he, by leaving these countries under their former modes of government, mean only to keep them dependent on France? What were his designs respecting Rome and the Pope? Would he recognise the latter under the twofold aspect of a temporal and spiritual power?

In the views of the advantages to be reaped from our victories in Italy, and of the use we should make of the preponderance they gave us in that country, which I had submitted to the Directory,

I had particularly insisted on two results which I looked upon as the real fruit of our conquests: the complete destruction of the power of Austria in Italy, and the overthrow of the Papal Government. I was firmly convinced that emancipated France had no more formidable and implacable enemy than that Power; it was therefore indispensable that I should be in harmony with a conqueror who, after subjugating Italy by force of arms, was not the man to neglect its political administration.

I was quite sure he would agree with me as to the exclusion of the House of Austria from all power and even from all property in Italy; but I was not so certain of his views on the other question.



CHAPTER IV.

The Author's interview with General Buonaparte—Conclusion of the armistice between the General and Prince Pignatelli, Plenipotentiary at Naples—The Author returns to Florence—He goes away again to visit General Buonaparte at Bologna—His interview with him—The Author does not succeed in preventing the violation of the neutrality of Tuscany and the occupation of Leghorn by the French—In returning from Leghorn, General Buonaparte stops at Florence, visits the Grand Duke and dines with him—A treaty being concluded between the Pope and the French Republic, the Author goes to Rome to secure the fulfilment of its conditions—The gloomy fanaticism reigning in Rome—Some discontented Italians having claimed the intervention of the French for the purpose of introducing Republican Institutions in Italy, the Author, instructed by the Directory to inform them of his views, strongly opposes the project—Being superseded by Cacault in the duty of superintending the fulfilment of the terms of the armistice at Rome, the Author returns to Florence—Rumours of the reverses experienced by Buonaparte produce great excitement in Italy—The Governments no longer conceal their tendencies, and the Author sends M. Fréville to Paris to point out to the Directory the necessity of excluding Austria from all influence in Italy, and of destroying the Papal Government—The Author is appointed Ambassador at Turin, but before entering upon the exercise of his functions, he has to under-

take a mission to Corsica as Commissioner-Extraordinary of the Government—Sketch of the State of Tuscany, the conditions of life, and customs of the Florentines.

AFTER having confided the guidance of affairs during my absence to M. Fréville, I began my journey on the 3rd Prairial (May 22, 1796). I went by Prato and Pistoja, and crossing the Apennines by the magnificent road made by Leopold's orders a few years before, I reached Rubiera, and from thence Reggio, without having touched Pontifical territory. This I thought prudent, on account of the hostility which still existed between France and the Pope. It was with a view to placing his States in a direct line of communication with the other possessions of the House of Austria in Italy that the Grand Duke had ordered this road, which terminated at Rubiera, to be made.

From Reggio I went by Parma and Placenza to Milan. The armistices recently concluded with the Dukes of Modena and Parma opened a free passage to the French through their territories, and the neighbourhood of our triumphant armies held the population in check. But, in spite of the terror and astonishment produced by our victories, the aversion of the inhabitants was visible on every occasion. Revolts had broken out, and I was detained one whole day at Placenza by a riot at Binasco, a large

town between Milan and Pavia. This revolt, in consequence of which the latter city shut its gates and imprisoned the French garrison, assumed a serious aspect, and was only suppressed by sanguinary military executions. As the roads were very unsafe, in consequence of these disturbances, I did not cross the Po until tranquillity was re-established on both sides of the river.

I reached Milan on the 6th Prairial (May 26, 1796), but found that General Buonaparte was not there. Having retraced his steps with his ordinary rapidity, punished the rioters and reduced Pavia to submission, he had proceeded to besiege Mantua, the only stronghold in all Lombardy which, with the fortress of Milan, still remained in the power of the Austrians. I was therefore obliged to go to headquarters to find him. I remained, however, several days at Milan, and there saw Salicetti, the Commissioner of the Executive Directory, with whom I had no previous acquaintance. Judging from the reputation he had acquired in the Convention, and which had preceded him into Italy, I expected a cold reception, and was not a little surprised to meet a man of the greatest politeness and urbanity of demeanour, and who received me with the utmost courtesy. Salicetti, of whom I shall have to give a detailed account further on in these Memoirs, and of whom I shall say no more

here than that he possessed great ability, recognised the necessity of conforming in manner and style of conversation to the fashion of the country in which he now lived. In this, at first sight, he appeared to have perfectly succeeded;* but in the course of our frequent interviews I found we were not at one as to the political course to be pursued in Italy. I insisted especially that the neutrality of Tuscany must be respected. While admitting the justice of our complaints against its Government, I maintained that it would be worthy of the generosity of France to pardon its errors, and of her justice to observe the confidence manifested by the Grand Duke by his treating with us, and being the first to set the example of the re-establishment of political relations between the Republic and the Continental Powers. But I soon saw that the Commissioner of the Directory had other views, and differed with me from another motive than that of avenging the injuries which the French had sustained at Leghorn. It was the wealth of that city which tempted his cupidity. Its riches were all regarded as English property; and, under that pretext,

* He had, however, exercised some severity in driving from Milan certain distinguished citizens whose influence he feared. Among the number was Signor de Melzi, who afterwards played a great part in the annals of his country. He went to Florence, where I saw a good deal of him, and a friendship sprung up between us which lasted until his death.

should we become masters of Leghorn, everything would fall into our hands. The imagination of man had never conceived a more splendid prize. Part of the booty, no doubt, would have to go to the State, but a great deal would remain in the hands of those charged with its distribution. From the moment that I recognised his real end I despaired of the success of my own views, and saw that the only chance of prevailing was my having better luck with the Commander-in-Chief.

I left Milan on the 15th Prairial (June 3), and directed my steps towards headquarters; but on reaching Brescia I learned that Buonaparte was expected there from day to day. I therefore remained at Brescia, where I found Prince Belmonte-Pignatelli, who had arrived there before me.

On the 17th Prairial, Buonaparte came to Brescia from Verona. He had entered the latter city on the 15th, after having forced the remainder of the Austrian army, commanded by Beaulieu, to recross the Adige and to retire upon Trente by the valley watered by that river. He was on his way back to Milan, and I was with him a few moments after he dismounted. I was quite astonished at his appearance. Nothing could be more unlike the idea my imagination had formed of him. In the midst of a numerous staff, I saw a man below the middle height, and of an extremely spare figure. His powdered hair, oddly

cut and falling squarely below the ears, reached down to his shoulders. He was dressed in a straight coat, buttoned up to the chin, and edged with very narrow gold embroidery, and he wore a tri-colored feather in his hat. At first sight he did not strike me as handsome; but his strongly-marked features, his quick and piercing eyes, his brusque and animated gestures revealed an ardent spirit, while his wide and thoughtful brow was that of a profound thinker. He made me sit near him, and we talked of Italy. He spoke in short sentences and, at that time of his life, very incorrectly. He said that nothing would be really done until we were in possession of Mantua; that then only could we consider ourselves masters of Italy; that so difficult a siege must necessarily last long; that we had not the means even of commencing it, and that for the moment we must be content with surrounding the place; that it could not be doubted but that Austria would put another army on foot in order to succour so important a stronghold, but that she required time in which to assemble an army; so that we had consequently a month before us, which he intended to employ in advancing towards the centre of Italy, making himself master there, and securing tranquillity on that side when the war in Upper Italy should recommence. His discourse naturally led me to mention the overtures that Prince Belmonte-Pignatelli

had made to me at Florence; I informed him of the Prince's presence at Brescia, and of my desire to present Pignatelli to him. He said that this was good news, and that he, like me, saw no objection to treating for an armistice.* I proposed that he should stipulate as one of its conditions that the ports of the kingdom of Naples should be closed to the English, "Ah! that is the policy of the diplomatist," he answered abruptly. "What we must stipulate for just now is that Naples shall immediately withdraw her troops from the Austrian army. The infantry is worthless; but you are aware that they have four excellent regiments of cavalry which have already given me a great deal of trouble. I should like to get rid of these as speedily as possible. Send M. de Belmonte to me; the treaty shall soon be made." And, in fact, the treaty was drawn up, and signed in the course of that day—in less than two hours. I managed, however, to have a clause inserted by which it was stipulated that the Neapolitan vessels should separate at the earliest opportunity from the English squadron.†

* He used the word *amnesty* for *armistice* throughout the whole conversation.

† This armistice, called simply a *suspension of hostilities*, is dated from Brescia, June 5 (19th Prairial, year IV.), and signed Buonaparte and Belmonte-Pignatelli. It contains five articles only, of which the fourth relates to the Neapolitan vessels.

This affair concluded, I began to discuss the general policy of Italy with Buonaparte. I saw that he was ill-disposed towards Tuscany and already contemplated the occupation of Leghorn. I tried to discuss that point, but as he was in haste, I saw clearly that he would not listen; I therefore confined myself to giving him a memorandum drawn up at Milan, in which I had exhaustively treated the question, which I could not argue with him verbally. I told him that I had left a copy in Salicetti's hands, although I perceived that the reputed wealth of Leghorn tempted him towards so profitable a conquest. "The Commissioners of the Directory," he answered impatiently, "count for nothing in my policy. Let them busy themselves, and welcome, with the administration of the public revenues, for the moment at least, the rest does not concern them. I do not expect they will long retain their posts, nor will the Directory send me others in their room. On the other hand, Citizen Miot, I will read your Memorandum, and I hope you will meet me at Bologna, where I shall be, no matter what are

* This Memorandum turned on the points before indicated: the expulsion of the Austrian power from Italy, and the annihilation of the Papal Government. I also endeavoured to show that the dignity of France, as well as her manifest interest, demanded that she should refrain from a violation of the neutrality of Tuscany.

my future plans, in a fortnight's time. I shall send a courier to inform you of my arrival. Adieu."

The horses were harnessed. He crossed the rooms adjoining that in which he had received me, and gave some orders to Murat, Lannes and Junot, his aides-de-camp, and the other officers in attendance. Every one maintained towards him an attitude of respect, and I may even say of admiration. I saw none of those marks of familiarity between him and his companions that I had observed in other cases, and which was consonant with republican equality. He had already assumed his own place, and kept others at a distance.

I saw him off, and then returned to my hotel, greatly struck and in some sort bewildered by what had just taken place. I immediately occupied myself with committing the particulars of this interview to paper, and I then took leave of Prince de Belmonte, who was returning to Naples by way of Milan, much surprised and delighted at a diplomatic negotiation being concluded during a change of horses. I passed the night at Brescia, and left the town next morning for Venice. I was too near that celebrated city not to gratify the curiosity I had long felt, by a visit to it.

The mainland of the Venetian Republic was partly in the occupation of the French. Dezenzano,

* General Berthier was not just then with Buonaparte.

Peschiera on Lake Guarda, and Verona, an important post at the entrance of the valley of the Adige, were garrisoned by French troops, and, as had always happened in Italian wars, Venice, unable to enforce respect for her neutrality, was again in this campaign fated to supply a field of battle to the armies that were disputing the conquest of that beautiful and hapless country. I found, however, no French troops beyond Verona. From the gates and towers of Vicenza and Padua the standard of St. Mark was flying; the smiling valley of Brenta lay before the traveller, adorned by the luxurious dwellings of the wealthy owners of a hundred magnificent palaces, rising from the banks of the river, whose waters were furrowed in every direction by boats and gondolas. During this journey I forgot the busy scenes I had left behind, and enjoyed the tranquil landscape passing before my eyes, and it was through scenes of continual enchantment that I reached Fusino on the lagoon. There, a far different spectacle presented itself, and I beheld, at last, the superb city, once the proud Queen of the Adriatic, rising from the bosom of the waves on which she seems rather to float than to repose.

Venice, when I saw her in June 1796, was still what she had been for twelve centuries. The same government, the same customs subsisted; I beheld ancient Venice, although her existence was almost

at an end. It was therefore with lively interest that I visited her squares, her churches, and above all her ducal palace, and the halls which had witnessed so many great and sanguinary measures; the secret tribunals, the terrible prisons; mute walls which though about to fall, were still standing, eloquent of remembrances which strike the imagination with that terror which they can no longer inspire. The powerful institutions which had so long sustained that formidable government, now shaken to their foundations by the French Revolution and the presence of our armies, were tottering, and could no more support the grand edifice; the least shock must bring it to the ground. Nothing, indeed, was changed in appearance, but everything was about to change, and a presentiment of this was universally felt.

After having passed a few days at Venice, where I did not meet the Minister of the French Republic, M. Lallemand, but where M. Jacob, the Secretary of Legation, took the greatest pains to gratify my curiosity, I set out on my return to Florence. When I had passed the Adige and the Po, I resolved on continuing my route by Ferrara and Bologna. The Pope was at this period endeavouring to obtain an armistice, which was concluded shortly afterwards. The strict orders by which Frenchmen were forbidden to enter the Papal States had already been

modified. I was not, therefore, in any way impeded, and although I stayed but a few hours at Bologna, the Governor, on being informed of my arrival, sent to offer me any facilities I might desire for the continuance of my journey. I thanked him, and passing the Apennines on the following day reached Florence on the 25th Prairial (June 13).

Great changes had taken place in the Tuscan Government during my short absence. The Grand Duke, alarmed by our successes, trembling for Leghorn, and aware that the Directory was not satisfied with the reparation he had already made, had resolved, in hopes of dispelling the storm which he saw was coming, to give the conduct of Foreign Affairs to Signor Fossombroni, one of his chamberlains, who had acquired a distinguished reputation in mathematical science.* By this arrangement he terminated the correspondence between the French Legation and Signor Serrati, a correspondence which had become more than ever strained and intricate owing to the dislike that Serrati, as Governor of Leghorn, had always evinced for the French, and his extreme partiality for the English. But although the new arrangement was agreeable to us in that respect, it produced no

* Signor Fossombroni is the author of a highly esteemed work, published at Avezzo in 1781, entitled, 'Saggio di Ricerche sull' Intensità del Lume.'

change in the mind of the Cabinet. Signor Fossombroni was evidently only an intermediary between us and Signor Serrati, whose influence still existed, and who, in fact, really regulated the conduct of affairs.

Meanwhile the causes of complaint to which the weakness of the Tuscan officials at Leghorn had given rise, far from diminishing, increased, and excited great discontent among the French. It looked as if the officials were acting in concert with the persons who, for other reasons than those stated above, were urging the Commander-in-Chief to an expedition on Leghorn. The danger to Tuscany was evident, and I soon perceived that it was no longer possible either to avert it, or preserve the neutrality of the country. The French army was approaching in two columns; one was advancing on Reggio by the new Apennine route, and was approaching Pistoja, the other was marching on Bologna. Thus our troops were on the point of entering the territory of the Grand Duke. No hope of preventing the violation of the treaty remained, all that could be done was to regulate the movement and to see that it caused as little damage and disorder as possible. I had received from Buonaparte, as he had promised me, an intimation of his arrival at Bologna, and I waited upon him in that town on the 4th Messidor (June 22). He was con-

versing with General Berthier when I was shown in. Berthier was, like myself, a native of Versailles; I had been very familiar with him during my childhood and youth, and we addressed each other with our old intimacy, using the "thou" and "thee." Buonaparte remarked this, and when he had dismissed Berthier, said he wished to have a private conversation with me. Before entering on this, he asked me, "How long have you known Berthier, I see you are very familiar with him?" I explained in a few words. "Very well," he answered, "but do you, like so many people, believe what I have read in the country newspapers, that it is to Berthier that I owe my success, that he directs my plans, and that I only execute what he has suggested to me?"*

"Not at all," I replied; "I know him too well to attribute to him a kind of ability which he does not possess. And if he did, most decidedly he would not give up the glory of it to you!" "You are right," answered Buonaparte with warmth, "Berthier is not capable of commanding a battalion!"† He

* Certain foreign newspapers, in order to lessen Buonaparte's glory, delighted to represent him as the pupil of Berthier, who certainly was at least fifteen years older than he.

† In these words there was perhaps exaggeration, and certainly ill-humour. It is, however, a fact, that Buonaparte never confided an expedition to Berthier, nor ever employed him except as Chief of the Staff. He did give him in 1798, when

stopped there, and we began to discuss the object of my journey seriously. This interview lasted a long time, and he heard me with great attention.

I explained to him in detail my reasons for insisting on the observance of the neutrality of Tuscany. "What are you going to do?" I asked him. "You are departing from the real object of the war, instead of pursuing the Austrians in their retreat, and going either through Tyrol or by Styria to threaten Austria with the presence of a victorious army, as I proposed in the despatches which I have written to Paris. By withdrawing from Upper Italy you give the enemy time to breathe and to put a fresh army into the field, larger than that which you have just so completely and gloriously defeated. In the meanwhile, as you must occupy Leghorn and maintain your line of communication with that town, you weaken yourself by the necessity of leaving a portion of your forces there. And do not be deceived; you will not gain the advantages you expect from the occupation of Leghorn. A large part of the wealth that the English possess there has already been removed or hidden. No sooner will you have entered the port of Leghorn, than the

leaving Italy, the command in chief of the army, but, as the reader will see, he did so only to justify the opinion which he expressed on the occasion of my second interview with him.

English will enter Porto-Ferrajo,* and we shall have no right to complain of a violation of neutrality, of which we ourselves shall have set the example. Of course, notwithstanding the precautions of the English merchants, there will still be merchandise and property of theirs in Leghorn. Seals will be put on their warehouses; their goods will be sold; but who profit by those seizures and sales? The Commissioners of the Directory; the crowd of agents who follow your army, attracted by the hope of gain. You will be engaged in military operations, which must occupy your every moment and your every thought, and you will soon lose sight of Leghorn. Frightful abuses will result from the occupation, scandalous fortunes will be made, and I shall be the reluctant witness of countless transactions dishonouring to the French name, but which I shall be powerless either to prevent or to punish. Everything will be disguised under the grand names of patriotism, insults to avenge, and respect for the national flag. Immediately on your departure, a dictatorial power will be established, there will be vexations of all kinds, and the popular feeling, already averse to us, will become still more inimical. Then if the fortune of war should waver for a moment, the French would be exposed

* The English, in fact, seized upon Porto-Ferrajo on 28th Messidor (July 11), less than a fortnight after the French entered Leghorn.

to the most merciless reprisals, and neither an armistice nor even a treaty of peace could insure their safety."

"If I had heard what you had to say sooner," replied the General, "perhaps I should not have given orders for the movement that is taking place to-day; but it is too late now, it has commenced. The Directory is expecting to find mountains of gold at Leghorn, and has its head turned. Every one sides with its action; I am powerless. I will try to prevent disorder, you may assure the Grand Duke of that. But, then, he must give the strictest orders that the troops are to be respected and their wants abundantly supplied. I shall go to Florence on my return from Leghorn. I shall finish with the Pope to-morrow. I mean to grant him an armistice, but on condition that he give us money, paintings, and statues. If you will go to Rome and undertake the execution of the treaty, I will forward it to you from Pistoja, where I shall be in two days' time, and where I shall be glad to see you again, if your occupations will permit. In any case we shall meet at Florence."

I answered in a few words. The General's intention of treating with the Court of Rome proved that, supposing him to have looked over the memorandum I had forwarded to him a fortnight previously at Brescia, he had not adopted the opinions expressed

in it. To treat with the Pope was to recognise his power, and to guarantee his existence both as Prince and as Pontiff. I pointed this out to Buonaparte, but he evaded an explanation, and I perceived that he had no intention of taking advantage of our victories to destroy the double power of the Holy See, and that, notwithstanding the sacrifices he was about to exact from the Papal Court, he was careful to maintain the principle of its existence and anxious for its safety. Was he already thinking of the use which he would one day make of it? That he was, cannot be proved; but subsequent events have shown that the conjecture is at least plausible.

Seeing therefore that there was nothing more to be done to advance the principal object of my journey, that the neutrality of Tuscany was to be violated, and that Rome would escape with the sacrifice of some money and pictures, I confined myself to asking that Buonaparte would at least, when he moved the columns of his army, avoid sending any troops through Florence. I represented to him that the Grand Duke was particularly anxious to spare his capital the inconveniences and in a sense the shame of foreign troops passing through it, and that it seemed to me to be right to satisfy him on this point. The General gave me his promise, and we parted. In the course of the day I saw the Commissioners of the Directory, Salicetti and Garrau.

They purposed following the march of the army to Leghorn, and announced to me that after having regulated the affairs of the administration they would come in their turn to visit me at Florence. I entered into no particulars with them; and left Bologna on the following morning, 5th Messidor, year III. (June 23, 1795). I arrived at Florence on the same day.

I found the Government there in a state of the greatest alarm. Notwithstanding the promise made to me at Bologna, a column of the French army was marching on Florence, and in two days' time was to pass through the city. The excitement was extreme, and the conjuncture all the more unfortunate, that the passage of the troops would occur on the Feast of St. John, which is celebrated with great pomp at Florence, that Saint being the patron of the city.*

I saw the Grand Duke on the morning of the 6th Messidor (June 24), at a place which he had appointed in the Boboli Gardens. I protested to

* On the Feast of St. John, the Grand Duke with his Court proceeds in the morning to the Palazzo-Vecchio square, to receive the homage of the magistrates of Florence and of the other towns of his States. On the eve of the Feast, also, he is present in great state at the horse-races, which attract vast crowds. On these two days in the year, only, does the Court of Tuscany, which is very simple in its habits, display any magnificence.

him that I had received a positive promise from General Buonaparte that no troops of any kind should pass through his capital, that I suspected there must be some misunderstanding about the order, but that I was going to send off a courier and had no doubt it would be countermanded. In fact, the courier on his return brought me a despatch from the Chief of the Staff which informed me that through an official mistake only, some troops had been ordered to pass through Florence, and that the error had been rectified.

Meanwhile the French army destined for the occupation of Leghorn had entered Tuscan territory by way of Pistoja on the 5th Messidor, and Buonaparte, who was already in the town, sent me his aide-de-camp, Marmont, on the 8th, with a letter announcing to the Grand Duke that the Executive Directory had ordered a march on Leghorn. To that information the General added, that, although forced to take this step by the repeated insults which the national flag had suffered in Leghorn at the hands of the English, the French Government desired to maintain friendly relations with Tuscany.*

The aide-de-camp was also the bearer of a letter for me from Berthier. He informed me that

* This letter, together with the answer made to it by Fossombroni in the name of the Grand Duke, may be found in the 'Gazette de Florence,' of Tuesday, June 28, 1796.

General Buonaparte wished to see me, but that I must come that same night, because he intended to leave early on the morning of the 9th for Leghorn. I could not start, accompanied by Marmont, until very late on the night of the 8th, and I learned at Prato that the General had already gone on. I went no farther, therefore, but returned to Florence, where I waited to see him on his way back from Leghorn.

The French army, which had begun to move on the 6th Messidor, was advancing on Leghorn from Pistoja, without crossing the territory of the Republic of Lucca although that route, being the shortest, seemed the most natural.* On the 9th

* M. Redon de Belleville, then Consul of the Republic at Leghorn, assured me some time after the occupation of that town, that good treatment for Lucca had been dearly bought by the magistrates of the Republic. According to information which he had obtained, a sum of from £240,000 to £280,000 was placed by the Commissioners of Lucca in the hands of an agent of Salicetti, at a house in the suburbs of Leghorn. This agent was the elder Arena. He was a compatriot of the Commissioner of the Directory, and had been a member of the Convention. He was appointed afterwards one of the Council of the Five Hundred, and on the 18th Brumaire, year VIII., was one of those deputies who most strenuously opposed the designs of Buonaparte. His brother, Joseph Arena, afterwards played a part in the conspiracy of Ceracchi, year IX., and perished on the scaffold. I do not know how far the truth of the fact I relate may be relied on, but I am certain that M. de Belleville was incapable of inventing it. The immense fortune that Salicetti made in Italy gives it probability.

Messidor (June 27) a division of cavalry reached the gates of the town. The officer in command having presented himself at the house of Spanocchi, the Governor, was at first coldly received; but after a few difficulties, which were promptly settled, the troops entered the town and made themselves masters of the most important positions. A proclamation was placarded to tranquillise the inhabitants, whose hostile feelings towards the French were freely manifested. Buonaparte arrived that evening, and ordered the arrest of the Tuscan Governor, of whose conduct the general of the vanguard had complained. The following is a letter which Berthier sent me by one of his aides-de-camp to inform me of these events. With it came a letter from Buonaparte to the Grand Duke.

“ Headquarters, Leghorn, 10th Messidor,
“ Year IV. of the French Republic,
“ One and Indivisible.

“ THE CHIEF OF THE STAFF TO HIS FRIEND MIOT.

“ Everything here, my dear friend, is going on well. The late Governor played scapegoat for all. He certainly showed very different feelings towards us from those evinced by His Royal Highness. After you have read the letter of the Commander-in-Chief to the Grand Duke, send it on to him as quickly as possible.

“The Commander-in-Chief will reach Florence the day after to-morrow. We shall come to your house. He desires me to tell you that he expects you to give a grand ball and supper. I sincerely hope that our ambassador will display dignity and magnificence worthy of the French Republic. I must tell you that we want to be put up at the Legation.

“Adieu. I embrace you. My aide-de-camp will tell you all I have left unsaid.

“ALEXANDER BERTHIER.”

I handed Buonaparte's letter to the Grand Duke, excused as well as I could the violence used towards the Governor of Leghorn, and announced the speedy arrival of the General. The Grand Duke received these communications with ill-concealed concern, but at the same time with resignation. He told me that he would give orders for the reception of the General with the honour due to his rank, and spoke to me with the greatest admiration of his military talent and of the glory he had acquired by his victories. I assured him on my side that the General would hasten to solicit the honour of being presented to him, and the audience, equally painful for both parties, was brought to a close—coldly, but without any rupture.

Buonaparte, according to promise, reached Florence on the 12th Messidor, year IV. (June 30, 1796),

at about seven in the evening.* He alighted at the palace in which I lived,† whither the Grand Duke had sent a company of infantry with a flag to receive him. He was accompanied by General Berthier and two aides-de-camp, Murat and Leclerc; and escorted by a picket of dragoons. I received him and his staff into my house, and thus there was no need to quarter any one in the town. The soldiers were lodged in a vast orangery belonging to the gardens of the Ximenès Palace. The inhabitants of Florence were thus in no way inconvenienced by the presence of the French dragoons, and all vexatious incidents were avoided. I had invited a great many people to dinner, and there was a crowd at my house, both before and after the play. Curiosity to see a man who had accomplished such prodigious exploits attracted great numbers to the theatres; the streets through which Buonaparte passed, from the San Fridiano Gate, by which he entered, to the Pitti Gate, near which I lived, a distance forming the diameter of the town, were filled with the whole population who flocked from every quarter to behold the spectacle. His was truly a triumphant entry, although no

* He had remained on the 29th of June at San Miniato, where Canon Philippe Buonaparte, one of his relatives, lived. He left San Miniato again on the 30th.

† Palazzo Ximenès, via porta Pitti.

shouts were uttered by the multitude, and astonishment rather than admiration prevailed over every other sentiment in the reception of the conqueror.

The next morning I accompanied him to the Court and presented him to the Grand Duke,* with whom he conversed for some time. His Imperial Highness invited the General to dinner, and left it to him to name the officers of his staff to whom he desired the same honour to be extended. The dinner took place, but the Grand Duchess, pleading an indisposition, did not appear. The Grand Duke placed my wife on his right hand, and Buonaparte on his left. A few ladies of the Court were present. After dinner the General took leave of the Grand Duke, and we went down with him into the Boboli Gardens, where a courier, arriving from headquarters, handed him despatches announcing the surrender of the fortress of Milan. I had arranged to give the ball he had wished for on the next day, but he could not stay longer, and left at once to return to headquarters by way of Bologna. In the various conversations that I had with Buonaparte during those two days, he appeared to me to be intent upon the movements of the Austrians, and very anxious to rejoin his army.

* Fourteen years after, in 1811, I saw this same Grand Duke, at the Tuileries, standing unnoticed amid the crowd who besieged the doors of Buonaparte, now become Emperor and King, and awaiting, with the other courtiers, the hour of his "lever."

I know that it was with regret he left troops in Tuscany, although he had reduced their number as low as possible. I entreated him to deal as gently as he could with the country, so as not to enrage the inhabitants at a moment when he had so few men to control their discontent, and secure his own line of communications from interruption.

I suggested to him that he should put forth a proclamation enjoining on the superior officers the necessity of the strictest discipline during the passage of the French troops through Tuscany. He consented, and I began to draw it up; but he was offended by a phrase in which I used the expression, "*the Commanders of the French army,*" and erasing these words with some irritation, he told me that the army had *but one Commander*, and that was himself. After several attempts at drawing up the proclamation, he resolved to issue it from Bologna, where he was to arrive next day, but I heard nothing more of it. Notwithstanding this slight cloud, we parted on very good terms, and from that time forward our correspondence was carried on in a confidential and friendly spirit, which subsisted between us for a long time.

After the General's departure for Northern Italy, the Commissioners of the Directory, who had remained at Leghorn, placed seals on the English property there, sold part of it, and used the rest for

the supply of the army. But as I was in no way concerned in these financial transactions, I can give no details on the subject. When the preliminary arrangements had been made, the two Commissioners, Salicetti and Garrau, came to spend a few days at Florence. Madame Buonaparte, who was curious to see the town, also arrived there a short time afterwards. On that occasion I renewed my acquaintance with her. I had met her in society at Paris, but not often, and I had formed an estimate of her which my increased intimacy with her during her stay at Florence only served to confirm. Never has any woman united greater kindness of heart with greater natural grace, never has any woman done more good with more pleasure than she. She honoured me with her friendship, and the recollection of the kindness she showed me until the last moments of her too brief existence will never be erased from my heart.

When my guests had departed, I began to prepare to leave Florence for Rome. But in order to explain the motives of this journey, I must go back a little in my narrative.

At the commencement of the war in Italy, and especially when the temporary success of the Austrians in the Riviera of Genoa, under General de Vins, during the month of Messidor, year III. (July 1795), had restored confidence to the Powers inimical to France, the Pope had taken an active

part in the war, and once more roused against us the same populace which in January 1793 had murdered Consul Basseville. After that event, no French agent had remained at Rome; our artists had all sought refuge at Florence, and we had thus been three years without holding any communication with Rome. When Spain recognised and entered into a treaty with the French Republic, on the 4th Thermidor, year III. (July 22, 1795), a share of the enmity that we inspired devolved on the Spaniard, and his residence in Rome soon became unbearable to the Chevalier d'Azara, ambassador from Spain to the Holy See.

He also established himself at Florence, in the spring of 1796, and I then enjoyed the advantage of intimacy with that cultivated lover of the fine arts, who had adopted Rome as his second fatherland. He was a sincere friend to France, and shared our joy at the victories of our troops, while he at once foresaw that our success would occasion a change of language, if not of feeling, at the Court of Rome. He was not mistaken, and he was soon solicited, by the very Court which had in some sort exiled him, to employ his own best endeavours and the mediation of Spain, whom he represented in Italy, to obtain a suspension of hostilities until peace could be definitively arranged. M. d'Azara, having accepted this honourable mission,

came to the Commander-in-Chief at Bologna, accompanied by M. Antonio Guendy, whom the Pope had appointed his Minister Plenipotentiary. I saw them both on the 4th Messidor at Bologna, and on the next day, the 5th (June 23, 1796), the armistice was signed in the name of the Pope, by the Chevalier d'Azara and M. Guendy, and in the name of the French Republic by Buonaparte, Salicetti, and Garrau. The Pope undertook to pay twenty-one millions of Roman lire, and to hand over to France one hundred pictures, busts or statues, together with five hundred manuscripts.* The matter in hand was to get this armistice carried out, its conditions being very hard, and not as yet ratified by the Pope.† Buonaparte, as I have before said, had already informed me that he wished me to undertake the business, and had caused a copy of the treaty to

* The following is the text of the 8th Article of the Treaty, containing the agreement in question: "The Pope shall deliver up to the Republic, at the choice of the Commissioners who shall be sent to Rome, one hundred pictures, busts, vases or statues; among which will be included the bronze bust of Junius Brutus and the marble bust of Marcus Aurelius, both in the Capitol, also five hundred manuscripts, at the choice of the said Commissioners." It is to be remarked that the first Article states that the French Government consents to treat only in order to give a proof of its deference to the wishes of His Majesty the King of Spain.

† The ratification, although dated June 27, was not then made known. It was handed over to me at Rome in July.

be sent to me from Pistoja. He persisted in this resolution when at Bologna, and sent me, through Berthier, an official intimation that I was to repair to Rome. The Chevalier d'Azara, having returned from Bologna, was still at Florence when the despatch reached me, and I communicated it to him. He seemed pleased to find himself associated with me in matters of a delicate nature and requiring much moderation and good management. We had no troops in the neighbourhood of Rome, nor would we in any case have had recourse to force. He advised me, therefore, to defer my journey for a few days, that he might have time to precede me to Rome, whither he would repair without delay and whence he would write to me. I took his advice, and a few days afterwards I received the following letter from him :

"Rome, July 14.

"I reached Rome yesterday, having got through my journey satisfactorily, notwithstanding my bad state of health. You can easily imagine that since my arrival I have been occupied only with your journey. I have seen the Pope, and have informed him of all that you and I agreed on. You may set out therefore, and you will not meet with the slightest obstacle, either on your road, or in Rome. You will come to the Hôtel de Sarmiento, opposite the Spanish Embassy.

“Immediately on your arrival, we will meet and arrange together all that is to be done. I will introduce you to the Secretary of State; afterwards you shall visit the Pope, and I hope you will be satisfied with everybody. So far as I am concerned, you may rely on my desire to serve you and to ensure the success of your mission. I am anxious to embrace you, and to prove to you the interest I take in yourself personally, and the friendship I feel for you,” &c.

Some few days before this letter reached me, the Marquis Massimo, the Pope’s envoy for the negotiation of a definitive peace, had arrived at Florence, and I had seen him. He had assured me that his Holiness’s dispositions were most pacific, and that no obstacle would be offered to the carrying out of the armistice. Reassured, therefore, on all sides as to the success of my mission, and no longer detained in any way at Florence, where I left the Commissioners appointed by the French Government to collect objects of art in Italy,* with injunctions to join me as soon as possible, I started on the 30th Messidor (July 18), and reached Rome on the 3rd Thermidor (July 21). M. d’Azara came as far as Ponte Molle to meet me, where I got into

* This Commission comprised MM. Monge, Berthollet, Thomir, Barthélemy the painter, Moitte the sculptor, and Tinot, draughtsman and painter.

his carriage, and I entered the city with him in the midst of an immense crowd, who followed me with unfriendly glances, and whose traditional enmity was aroused by the tricolor-cockade in my hat, and in the hats of the persons who composed my suite.

Rome, at that time, presented a very singular and revolting spectacle. A gloomy fanaticism, kindled by the monks and fed by absurd fables, had filled the minds of all.

The populace was exclusively absorbed in religious practices, and listening to fanatical preachers, and the higher classes of society dared not hold themselves aloof. The streets were choked with long files of priests or monks, walking in procession and followed by enormous crowds. Men's imaginations were excited, and only dwelt on marvels, on murders and on vengeance. Far from quieting this commotion, the Government secretly encouraged it, regarding it as their strongest safeguard against the propagation of revolutionary principles, which they dreaded above all things. My presence and that of a few other Frenchmen, in the midst of a people ready at any moment to commit the greatest excesses, could not but increase the popular excitement, and I perceived that there would be no safety either for my countrymen or myself if the terror in

spired by our victories and the near neighbourhood of our armies were dispelled for even a single day, or if the fortune of war ceased for one instant to be favourable to us. The latter contingency arose. The news of Würmser's arrival at the head of a second Austrian army had revived all the hopes of our enemies. His success was considered certain; it was announced beforehand, although no operations were as yet begun, and the siege of Mantua was carried on uninterruptedly.

We, in the heart of Italy, already felt the consequences of these ominous reports, and we might have been seriously endangered before the news of the victories which soon after lent a new lustre to French arms had once more filled the people with that terror which was our only security.

I must, however, do justice to the conduct of the Pope's Government towards me. Although the reports abroad were of a nature to make it less docile in the carrying out of the armistice just concluded at Bologna, I did not at first meet with all the difficulties I expected. The Chevalier d'Azara, who seconded me admirably at each step I took, accompanied me to the Secretary of State, Cardinal Zelada, who gave me a positive assurance of the payment of the first instalment of the contribution which the Court of Rome was to furnish, by virtue of Article 9 of the armistice, and,

in fact, I received proof that this first instalment was on its way to Bologna. I obtained also, and on the spot, the liberation of certain men who had been imprisoned for their political opinions, and of whom General Buonaparte had sent me a list.

On the next day, after my interview with the Secretary of State, I was conducted by M. d'Azara to the Monte Cavallo* Palace, to have an audience of the Pope. I was accompanied by M. Fréville, Secretary to the Legation. We each wore the uniform of the National Guard. The Pope was seated on a daïs, raised one step from the ground, with a canopy. In front of him was a table on which were a number of papers, writing-materials, and a bell. When I was announced by the chamberlain, who drew back the door-hangings, his Holiness rose, came down from the daïs, and advanced to meet me. M. d'Azara made a genuflection on entering; I only bowed profoundly, and the Pope, having taken me by the hand, led me up to the daïs, where he resumed his place, and, pointing to a seat on his left hand lower than his own, invited me by a gesture to be seated. M. Fréville sat near me, and the Chevalier d'Azara opposite the Holy Father's writing-table. Pius VI., although he had reached an advanced age, was still a remark-

* Formerly the Quirinal Hill. The Pope resides there in summer, the air being more salubrious than at the Vatican.

ably handsome man. He was distinguished by an elegant and well-proportioned figure, and a countenance full of nobility and mildness. He lacked none of the outward gifts of Nature, and it was impossible to approach him without a feeling of respectful admiration. This, at least, was the sentiment which I experienced on seeing him. The conversation was in Italian. I assured the Pope that, in carrying out the conditions of the armistice, I would do all in my power to render them less onerous, while I ventured to hope, in return, that his Holiness would deign to give orders that the Commissioners who had been entrusted with the selection of the works of art should have all needful facilities for fulfilling their mission. "I will do so," he answered eagerly; "the execution of these conditions is a sacred thing (*é cosa sacro-santa*). Rome will still be rich enough in objects of Art, and I do not think that in making this sacrifice I have bought the peace of my States too dear. Here," added his Holiness, "is the ratification of the treaty. I wished to hand it over to you myself, in order to convince you that I have no repugnance to investing this act with my consent."*

The conversation then turned on more general topics. We spoke of Rome, and of all that attracts

* The ratification, correctly drawn up, was signed Pius Papa VI.

the curiosity of strangers. At last, after an interview of half an hour, the Pope rose to dismiss me.

A few days after this audience, the Commissioners whom I had left at Florence rejoined me.

I found them much alarmed by the reports they had heard everywhere on the road between Florence and Rome, and by the ill-feeling they had observed at the places at which they had stopped. I could not wholly tranquillise them; I myself was anxious, and I had received no reassuring despatch either from the headquarters of the army or from Florence.

I advised them, however, to set about the mission entrusted to them; I put them in communication with the Pope's agents, and it was those same agents whom they employed to pack the valuable works which they selected.

In the brief leisure afforded by my numerous occupations, I visited Rome and made myself acquainted with the neighbouring country. But I could barely satisfy the most urgent demands of my curiosity. When I visited Italy ten years later, and made a longer stay at Rome in more tranquil times, I had an opportunity of thoroughly investigating that famous city. I shall therefore defer speaking of it until I shall have reached the later period of my narrative.

While the animosity of the Italian people to us

was revived by the first report of our reverses, which their enmity led them to receive as certainly true, a few men of sounder sense, and many others stimulated by private dislike, and especially by ambition to play a part in the history of their country, had hastened to the Commander-in-Chief, and even to Paris, with plans of revolution in Italy, and claimed the intervention of the French to help them to upset absolute government and, as they expressed it, to restore liberty to their country.

The importunity of these patriots, who displayed no less enthusiasm in their republican fanaticism than did the rest of their fellow-citizens in their religious fanaticism, made an impression on the Executive Directory, which was already disposed towards political proselytism, and I foresaw that if Buonaparte would lend a helping hand, it would not be disinclined to let this leaven of Revolution ferment, and to aid its development. A despatch which I received during my stay at Rome, revealed this to me. It contained one leading query: "Is it possible, is it desirable for the French Republic to republicanise Italy?" I was perhaps better able than any other political agent to discuss this question. I was in the heart of Italy. I had lived more than a year in the country; I had closely observed the conduct and the feelings of the people and their governments in the various

positions we had held towards them, whether as victors or as vanquished; I knew how much either of submission or resistance we had to expect from them. I believed it therefore to be my duty to put forward the opinions which circumstances had led me to form.

As I also desire to clear my character of the suspicion that during my stay in Italy I was guilty of participating in acts of violence or in breaches of faith, which, on the contrary, I always resisted or blamed, I will here copy the reply which I made to the question put to me by the Minister of Exterior Relations. That reply is dated Rome, 9th Thermidor, year IV. (July 27, 1796).

“CITIZEN MINISTER.

“I have received your letter of 29th Messidor since my arrival in this city. I will devote mine to answering the questions you address to me, by placing before you the result of the observations I have made on the state of public feeling in Italy, on the resources it offers, and on the use that may be made of it for the conception or the establishment of a new political system in the countries that have been subjugated by French arms. My further residence in Rome may furnish me with additional means of clearing up many difficulties and of forming a more general opinion.

“The chief question which is put to me, is the following: ‘Is it possible, is it desirable for the French Republic to republicanise Italy?’ The second part of this question depends clearly on the first; for it is evident that if such a change were possible it would certainly be desirable. All that is required, therefore, is to examine that possibility.

“If by the word *republicanise* is to be understood the establishment of a system of government founded on the same principles as our own, resting merely on such simple bases as those of political liberty and equality, and divested of all prejudices, I do not see as yet any means of attaining that end in Italy. We shall doubtless find a few sincere persons, but many others moved by private interests, and especially by a spirit of revenge, who will be anxious to persuade us that a complete revolution is possible and even easy. A cursory examination of the means they propose to employ, the monstrous alliance they would attempt between superstition and policy, the use they would actually venture to make of that execrable weapon in order to found a revolution, will, however, show how impracticable it would be as yet—in the full completeness I have just sketched out, and the Directory cannot be too much on its guard against such projects.

“If, on the contrary, in order to make our victories

conducive to our true interests, we confine ourselves in the present state of Italy to practicable political changes which will be useful to its inhabitants, the question, from that point of view, becomes more interesting and its discussion assumes real importance.

"You will remember, Citizen Minister, what I have stated in my correspondence as to the object which I believed should be aimed at in the war of Italy.

"To wrest his possessions in this part of Europe from the Emperor, to lessen the power of the Pope, since we can no longer think of destroying it altogether;* these were the principal results to which I pointed as the fruits of our victories.

"We have now the means of obtaining these two great results. We hold the country round Milan; the legations of Bologna and Ferrara are in our hands.

"To remove those beautiful and fertile provinces for ever from the domination of Austria and the Popes, is to attain as completely as possible the aim that we ought to propose to ourselves.

"It now becomes necessary to inquire under what government we must leave these countries, which we cannot and ought not to retain.

"That which has been done in Holland may

* From the moment that we treated with him we acknowledged his Government, and we could not, without flagrant breach of faith, seek to overthrow it.

serve us as a guide here. We have delivered Lombardy, Bologna and Ferrara from a despotic government, but we have no desire to violate their independence. It is for their inhabitants and not for us to make a revolution, and this distinction appears to me to be of the greatest importance. It is not for us to dictate laws for them, still less to impose on them our own. Let us watch their progress in the exercise of the power we have restored to them, but let us not take on ourselves the task of directing it. Let them seek, while protected and defended by a Power which watches over their safety, an organisation suited to their genius, and their religious opinions, in harmony with the ideas circulating among them; our part is to oppose the intrigues of a party who would bring them again under the yoke that we have broken, but not to force forward fruits of a kind which the climate can not as yet produce.

“The first step towards this result—the only one that appears to be desirable — would be a precise statement on the part of the Directory, declaring that these provinces shall never be restored to their former masters by any treaties concluded by the Republic. Until this is done, we can hardly hope that they themselves will take a decisive part; and even if they did, they would afterwards find themselves without sufficient means

to resist the attacks which might be made upon them.

“The Directory is probably not as yet prepared to make such a declaration. A moderate policy therefore, such as I have indicated above, seems to me the right course to follow. In any case, I think we must not for a long time abandon the forms of military government in the countries we have conquered in Italy ; and that, without forcing on the organisation of a new national government which would be without the necessary resources for self-maintenance, we should allow it to develop itself under our eyes. And when a general peace shall have secured the independence of those provinces, it will still be desirable for our interests to maintain our garrisons in them for a long time, or at any rate, in order to avoid any reproach from other nations of violating this same independence, to leave some French troops in the pay of the separate governments which will have been formed. Such, in my opinion, is the only means of consolidating the task we shall have accomplished, and a sound policy demands that, amid so much enmity and passion directed against us, which unhappily will not be completely quieted by the peace in Italy, we should continue to keep before her eyes a portion of the armies which have terrified and conquered her.

“A complete revolution in Italy is, to my

mind, impossible. If in the present state of public feeling such a revolution could take place, it would be terrible, owing to the excesses to which fierce and unprincipled men would abandon themselves. It would not result in any advantage to humanity or in the welfare of society, because it would be the work of fanaticism and revenge.

“But a change of government in the conquered States, the establishment of a new order of things, modified according to the surrounding circumstances, is both possible and desirable.”

To this letter I received no reply. Subsequent events have made it plain that the ideas of moderation and respect for the independence of peoples, which I had put forward, were not well received.

I had been two weeks in Rome, and, although the business of the execution of the conditions of the armistice was going on, I perceived that for some days past the Government had been acting in the matter with dilatoriness that led me to suspect that, being better informed than I of what was taking place in Upper Italy, they flattered themselves that the reverses we were sustaining there might eventually dispense them from keeping their promises. The darkest rumours were secretly spread about, and, as I had no means of refuting them, I soon found myself in a position as false as it was dangerous.

Things were in this state, when Cacault,* an agent of the French Republic, who had remained in Italy without ostensible title since 1793, arrived at Rome from headquarters. He brought me two letters, one from Buonaparte and one from Berthier. The first, on the supposition that I had not yet left Florence, advised me to remain there, and to delegate to Cacault the task of superintending the execution of the armistice concluded with the Pope. This change of plans was evidently the result of some manœuvres of Cacault, who had wished for this post, and easily persuaded Buonaparte that the numerous acquaintances he had formed at Rome would afford him better means of filling it, and other advantages which I did not possess. Besides which, Buonaparte, who knew my feelings about the Papal Government, and who intended to treat it tenderly, was sure of finding in Cacault a more yielding negotiator than I; one indeed, inclined by his own private views to second the General's views.

The other letter, Berthier's, dated, like the first,

* M. Cacault knew Italy, where he had long resided, perfectly well. He had been ordered to repair to Rome after the assassination of Basseville, but not having succeeded in getting there, he had remained at Florence, as an agent of the Republic, but without official position until my arrival. He successively occupied various diplomatic posts in Italy, and on his return to France he was created a Senator in 1803. He died at Clisson in 1805.

from the headquarters at Castiglione, on the 3rd Thermidor, and consequently before the raising of the siege of Mantua, was full of confidence and hope of fresh successes. But as it was already twelve days old, and more recent news had reached Rome, it had become valueless for the purpose of forming any opinion, and I could make no kind of use of it.

However, in spite of the dangers to which a journey in the midst of the general ferment produced by the accounts of our reverses, magnified by active ill-will, might expose me, I did not hesitate to undertake it. I handed over the business to Cacault, and started, the very evening of the day of his arrival, on my return journey to Florence.

I had not been misinformed as to the state of feeling throughout the Roman territory. I therefore avoided passing through Viterbo, where I knew that the excitement was greater than in any other part, and took the route through Civita-Castella, Narni, Terni, where I stayed a few hours in order to see the celebrated cascade, and Spoleto, where I intended to pass the night. But it was impossible to carry out my plan; a furious mob surrounded my carriage, and if I had not displayed coolness which took them aback, I should probably have been subjected to very bad treatment. I therefore

merely changed horses, and continued my journey by way of Foligno, Assisi, and Perugia.* I entered the Tuscan territory through Cortona and Arezzo, and although I was then in a country where I bore, so to speak, a sacred character, I saw, by the animus displayed by the inhabitants of the last-named town, that even that character would barely serve to protect me should we cease to be conquerors. As we drove from the gates of Arezzo, stones were thrown at my carriage; but it was dark, and this insult had no serious consequences; my horses quickly placed me beyond reach. Finally, I arrived at Florence on the 17th Thermidor, year IV. (August 4, 1796).

Profound consternation prevailed among the few French who were then at Florence. For several days the most disastrous accounts had succeeded each other without interruption, and my first interviews with the Tuscan Government convinced me that, if exaggerated, they were not unfounded. The populace of Florence, who until then had taken no decided part, now awoke from the calm indifference which characterised them. Inflamed by the monks, they began to imitate the Romans; they also had their miracles and their prophecies.

* I must do justice here to the Governor of Perugia, who received me with the utmost courtesy, and watched over my safety with sedulous care.

Their excessive credulity made them credit the most absurd rumours; they were persuaded that I had brought back Buonaparte in my carriage wounded; that he had died at my house, and that I had buried him in my garden. An immense crowd collected about my door; I was obliged to come out and address them, and I had great difficulty in preventing their forcing their way into my house in order to satisfy their stupid curiosity.

This state of alarm lasted for twelve days, and during that time the Grand Duke's government acted with such weakness as to make it evident to me that, far from wishing to repress the disturbance, it intended to make use of it to free itself from any remaining consideration for me, in the event of our sustaining further reverses. From the moment that we were or were supposed to be no longer formidable, it would have been useless to appeal for security to treaties which had simply been extorted by fear.

At last, on the 23rd and 24th Thermidor (10th and 11th August), couriers despatched from headquarters made their appearance, and put an end to our anxieties. During my stay in Rome, and my journey thence, hostilities had recommenced in Northern Italy. Würmser, at the head of a fresh Austrian army, had forced Buonaparte to raise the

siege of Mantua, leaving all his artillery on the spot. But this check, news of which had spread so rapidly, had been as quickly repaired by the wonderful victories of Salo, Castiglione, and Lonata (17th and 18th Thermidor). Never had so rapid and complete a change taken place in war; never had such genius, talent, and valour been displayed. A campaign of less than ten days' duration had reconquered Italy and routed all the projects of our enemies. But in proportion as the news of our reverses had been readily believed, did that of our victories meet with incredulity, and it was only after the lapse of several months, and when the surrender of Mantua ratified, as it were, the bulletins of our army, that the people were at last induced to credit our success.

For the time being, our reverses had brought back the Powers of Italy to their former policy and their former enmities. The negotiations for peace between the Pope and France had been interrupted,* the conditions of the armistice were no longer carried out; the Commissioners whom I had left at Rome had withdrawn, and gone back to Florence

* They were not completely broken off until a month later, the fourth complementary day of year IV. (September 20, 1796). The Pope declined any arrangement, nor would he state what were the modifications he would have desired in the stipulations of the treaty.

to wait for more favourable circumstances and fresh instructions.

Cacault only remained, and was carrying on some private communications, the Papal Government not having as yet decided on an open rupture.

Meanwhile, Buonaparte having pursued Würmser's army into the valley of Adige and Brenta, forced the General to shut himself up in Mantua. But another army, commanded by D'Alvinzi, soon made its appearance in Italy, and, to save this important stronghold, opened a fresh campaign, in the course of which the engagement at Arcola and the battles of Rivoli and Favorita immortalised the glory of the French arms.

While military events were thus hastening on, and Victory, still undecided, had not declared herself for either side, the difficulties of my position increased daily. The Tuscan people openly displayed their dislike to the French. I was grossly insulted several times, and my time was entirely occupied in hearing and laying before the Grand-Ducal Government the complaints which were addressed to me by the French inhabitants of Tuscany.

At length, being convinced by the facts before my eyes that there was no hope of security for the French, nor any real advantage to be obtained from our victories in Italy, so long as the House

of Austria should possess any of its territory, and that the Pope's Government should endure, I resolved on sending M. Fréville, Secretary of Legation, to Paris, with a despatch, in which I laid before the Executive Directory my observations on the state of Italy, and stated my views of the direction in which our policy should move.

I will here give a summary of the plan which I had drawn up.

I pointed out that Austria and Spain had been dominant in succession in Italy, but that France had always tried in vain to establish a permanent influence in the country; notwithstanding her victories, dominion had invariably slipped from her grasp.

"Austria, then, was exclusively powerful in Italy before the war. Venice was trembling, Genoa was sold, Naples shared in all the passions of Austria; the Pope was at her beck. This brilliant structure was overthrown by our first victories. Austria wants to build it up afresh; she calls on the people as auxiliaries to her army and succeeds in inflaming them; she is preparing another *Sicilian Vespers* for us in Italy. The various Governments approve and second her views. But for our recent victories we should be irretrievably lost.

"At the first wind of our reverses, neutrality

disappeared, the execution of treaties was suspended. We have therefore acquired no guarantee by negotiation, and we can only count on force, or on the establishment of a political system which will be a real guarantee. Now, therefore, is the time at which to treat this question.

“The first idea that presents itself is to alter the political situation of Italy entirely, in a word, to use the language of the day, to revolutionise her. I have opposed that solution; insurrection, even rebellion, may be kindled in Italy, but not a revolution.

“Let that part of Italy which we have conquered adopt a form of government of whatever kind, and let us protect it, provided these countries detach themselves altogether from Austria and the Pope. Let us possess nothing ourselves in Italy, but let us acquire influence there, and be a preponderating power only in the conquered part. As for the rest of the Peninsula, we must have another allied Power with us, which, acting on Rome and Naples, will keep them within defined bounds. Let Spain be that power.

“Spain is alive to her true interests; she has just made peace and allied herself with France; she will be responsible to us for Southern Italy. Let us give to her, or a Prince of her House, those possessions of Austria which form a part of her States in Northern

Italy, and which we will render independent.* By such a political arrangement Leghorn would be in the hands of Spain, and the neutrality of that port would no longer be an empty name. This plan involves, it is true, a complete rupture with the Grand Duke of Tuscany, but he himself has furnished us by his recent behaviour with a pretext for, and also with a right to it."

Fréville left Florence for Paris early in Fructidor, year IV. (middle of August, 1796). He had several interviews with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and presented a further development of my proposals in a detailed memorandum. In the end they were not adopted, and he rejoined me at Florence towards the end of Vendémiaire, year V. (October 1796). He was the bearer of a letter from the Minister, Charles Lacroix, very flattering to me, but altogether evasive. I gathered from this letter and from the details added by Fréville that the French Government desired to remain on cool terms with Tuscany, in order to take a decisive step of rupture or alliance, according to circumstances, and to be in a position to justify either the one or the other. It was easy to satisfy the Government in this respect.

The intercourse between the two Cabinets had become more strained than ever; recriminations

* This plan was afterwards adopted by Buonaparte, when he created the kingdom of Etruria for an Infant of Spain.

abounded on our side because of the weakness of the Tuscan Government, which allowed its neutrality to be disregarded, and showed itself altogether partial towards the English; and on the side of Neri-Corsini, the Grand Duke's Minister in Paris, because of the disrespect with which the Tuscan Government ^{had been} ~~treated~~ ^{by} our military commanders and troops at Leghorn. It must be admitted that both sides were in the right. The partiality of the Tuscan Government towards the English was not more evident than the behaviour of our officers and men towards the authorities of the country was insulting. They acted in defiance of all rules, or, if the term be preferred, in defiance of every popular prejudice.*

Whether my views as to the line of policy to be pursued in Italy had awakened some personal dislike towards me, or whether it was thought desirable to appoint an agent in Florence more dependent on the Commander-in-Chief than I was—and I have not discovered which—my mission in Tuscany was drawing to a close. Fréville had scarcely left Paris, when a decree of the Directory, dated the 2nd Brumaire, year V. (October 23, 1796),

* General Hullin, in command at Leghorn, celebrated the fête of the 10th of August there with a brilliant military display. Nothing could be more offensive to the Tuscans, nor more uncalled-for by the French.

changed all the diplomatic corps in Italy. I was appointed Ambassador to the Court of Sardinia; Cacault succeeded me at Florence as Minister Plenipotentiary, and Joseph Buonaparte was named resident Minister of the French Republic at the Court of the Infant-Duke of Parma. I did not, however, receive the decree containing my new nomination and its accompanying instructions until five months later. I was destined before I reached Turin to undertake a troublesome mission, for which I was in no wise prepared.

Corsica, which had been delivered to the English by Paoli, and occupied by them as a fourth kingdom annexed to the crown of the King of Great Britain, had just been evacuated by its new masters. They had never succeeded in subduing the interior of the island, frequent insurrections had kept them in continual alarm, and free communication between the various towns could only be effected by sea. The victories of the French army in Italy, under the command of one of their countrymen, had redoubled this internal ferment in Corsica, and the English had decided on entirely abandoning their conquest. In September 1796 they withdrew their troops, and also removed from Corsica their chief partisans, such as General Paoli, Pozzo di Borgo,

* The crown of Corsica was carried to London, in October 1794, by four Corsican deputies.

Beraldi and others, who sought an asylum in England. On the first intelligence of the English preparations for evacuating the island, Buonaparte despatched General Gentili thither at the head of two or three hundred banished Corsicans, and with this little band Gentili took possession of the principal strongholds. The island being thus restored to the rule of France, it became indispensable to provide temporarily for its civil administration and to prepare for the establishment of the constitution. Salicetti, Commissioner of the Directory, with the army of Italy, hastened to assume those functions, and had already repaired to Corsica, where he was beginning to exercise them. But the Directory had felt that it would not do to leave them in the hands of a man born in the island, having personal injuries to avenge, and who, even supposing him to be impartial in the conduct of affairs, could never persuade his countrymen that he was so. An administrator had therefore to be found, who should be an entire stranger to the country, having no interests but that of restoring order, healing quarrels, and bringing Corsica as soon as possible under the laws and institutions common to the rest of France. The choice fell on me, and on the 5th Frimaire, year V. (November 25, 1796), I received a decree of the Executive Directory, dated the 7th Brumaire, appointing me

Commissioner-Extraordinary of the Government in Corsica, and ordering me to proceed thither at once. Accordingly I prepared to set out, and left the Legation in the hands of Fréville, who succeeded me with the title of *Chargé d'Affaires*.

On returning from Corsica on my way to Turin, I stayed at Florence for a few days, but without any official character. My mission therefore came to an end at the period I have now reached, and as I shall have no further occasion to speak of Tuscany, I will summarise here in a few lines the observations I made on the country during a residence of nearly twenty months.

During the whole time that Leopold governed Tuscany, her prosperity had gone on increasing, her population had sensibly augmented and was still tending towards increase; while free-trade in grain had materially added to the products of agriculture. These results proved the beneficial influence of the principles adopted by Leopold, while the restrictions subsequently imposed on the grain trade have, by diminishing the products of the earth, confirmed the disadvantages of a prohibitive system. The events of the French Revolution, which brought war and all its attendant evils upon Italy, arrested the progressive impulse that Leopold had given to Tuscany. The administration which succeeded his, dreading the introduction of the principles which

were triumphant in France, believed, as it generally happens, that the best means of opposing the evil was not to yield points, which the spirit of the age and the new ideas which were circulating freely made it necessary to yield, in order to satisfy the needs of society, but to withdraw all that had been hitherto granted, and to return completely to the past. In all Leopold's institutions it detected the germs of Revolution, and it could think of no better way to kill those germs than by destroying the institutions. The nobility and the clergy, whose privileges had been restricted and whose alarm increased as the Revolution made progress in France, applauded this course of action, and aided it with all their influence. Nevertheless, it would be an error to believe that society in general attached much importance to these questions, and a still greater mistake to conclude that the people took any active part in them. With the exception of a few movements promoted with great difficulty at critical junctures, and of which I have had occasion to speak, the prevailing aspect of all classes was that of indolence. For two centuries and a half, Florence had lost the antique energy which had distinguished that noble city in the stormy times of the Republic. Her peaceable inhabitants, deprived of all their rights, were no longer the distrustful citizens, whom love of freedom, and of inde-

pendence had so often roused to the most courageous measures and the most generous sacrifices. They were no longer so many illustrious Mæcenæ who offered magnanimous hospitality to science and letters. Almost everywhere my eye fell on men basking in a beautiful climate, occupied only in the dull details of a monotonous life, and vegetating beneath a beneficent sky. As for the women, a mixture of piety and intrigue was, as it is throughout all Italy, their distinguishing characteristic. Morals were extremely relaxed, but as that relaxation was universal and, singularly enough, the result of a generally admitted social convention, it gave rise to no criticism, and so long as a woman kept on good terms with her *cavaliere servente*, and that she used some secrecy and a sort of decency in her infidelities towards him, she enjoyed a spotless reputation. The domestic habits of France were therefore regarded as not a little ridiculous; and although the report of the disappearance of all modesty from our manners since the beginning of the Revolution had preceded us at Florence, and turned the public mind against us, our women were, to our great astonishment, set down as intolerable prudes, and their husbands' conduct in accompanying them in public, contrary to the customs of the country, was considered unpardonable. But if the ladies of Florence were not

very scrupulous as to conjugal fidelity, they were scrupulous in inverse proportion as to religious practices, and a woman who, with a perfectly easy conscience, violated conjugal duties which are held sacred everywhere else, would not eat meat on a day of abstinence for any consideration. Nor were the other duties of religion observed less rigorously. They interfered a little, it is true, with the pleasures of intrigue; but they also served as a pretext for escaping from wearisome bonds, and it was usually at Easter that old intimacies were broken off and new ones formed. It was also at that holy season that the husband's consent to a change of *cavaliere servente* was asked and obtained, for changes of this kind are family affairs.

I do not, however, pretend to include the whole of society in this generalisation. No one has had better opportunities than I of knowing what remarkable exceptions were to be found at that time in Florence and the other principal towns of Tuscany; men and women of sterling merit and incapable of the weaknesses I have commented on. The famous physician Fontana, MM. Fabbroni, Fossombroni and Paoli, who have borne great names in natural science and mathematics; M. Pignotti, a writer of charming fables; M. Galuzzi, who wrote a history of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, and other learned and literary men, did honour to Tuscany and

preserved to her a remnant of her ancient renown. Several ladies, Madame Fabbroni among the number, were distinguished for their talents and cultivation, and would have shone with brilliant lustre in any country and in any society.

CHAPTER V.

Letter from General Buonaparte—The Author embarks at Leghorn and arrives at Bastia, where he finds Salicetti—He is instructed to adopt a system of conciliation, and to endeavour to reconcile party divisions—He publishes a proclamation accordingly—Political situation of Corsica—Some seditious risings are repressed and tranquillity re-established—Administration and laws organised, first in the department of Golo, and next in that of Liamone—Journey from Bastia to Ajaccio by Corte and the Col de Guizzavano, and from Ajaccio to Bonifacio by Gartena.

ON receiving the decree of the Directory which appointed me Commissioner Extraordinary of the Government in Corsica, accompanied by instructions bearing date the 12th Brumaire, I had hastened to inform Buonaparte of my appointment, and to ask his advice respecting the best way of fulfilling a mission whose difficulties I fully recognised. He sent me the following reply :

“ Headquarters, Verona.

“ 3d Frimaire, year V.

“ I have received, Citizen Minister, the letter you wrote me before your departure for Corsica. The

mission you are about to undertake is an extremely difficult one. Until all the work here is finished, it will not be possible to send any troops to Corsica. You will find General Gentili in command of this division there. He is an honourable man, and generally esteemed in the country. The people of Corsica are difficult to understand, their imagination being very lively, and their passions extremely active.

“I wish you health and happiness.

“BUONAPARTE.”

This letter was not encouraging. The General entered into no details, and sent me no help either in men or money. Nevertheless I did not despair of success, and I embarked at Leghorn on the 11th Frimaire, year V. (10th December, 1796).

We were obliged to put into harbour at Capraja * to avoid the English cruisers, and I was blockaded there for six days. I decided at last to leave the *Aviso* and to embark on board a felucca, and I took advantage of a calm, which detained the English ships, to row across the canal between Capraja and Corsica. In this way I landed on the 22nd Frimaire on the eastern coast of the island, near Erba Lunga, five miles from Bastia, whither I proceeded on the following day.

I had just left one of the most civilised cities in

* A small island to the west of Leghorn, about half-way between the mainland and the island of Corsica.

Italy, and it was with strange sensations that I found myself in a country whose wild aspect, barren mountains, and inhabitants all clothed alike in coarse brown cloth, contrasted so strongly with the rich and smiling country of Tuscany and with the comfortable, I might almost say the elegant, dress worn by the fortunate cultivators of that fertile soil. My disembarkation, on a dark winter's night, on an almost uninhabited coast, where I had found no better shelter than a smoky cabin, had inspired me with gloomy forebodings. But a few days passed on the island were sufficient to accustom me to its aspect, which had at first seemed so repulsive. The rich natural vegetation clothing the hills that slope downwards to the sea, the beauty of the sky and the mildness of the climate, in a season which is often very severe in France and Northern Italy, speedily dispelled my unfavourable impressions.

I found many reasons, subsequently, to convince me that in the variety of its sites, the characteristic grandeur of its mountains, and the majestic solitude of its forests, Corsica need not fear competition with the countries most renowned for beauties of the same kind, whether the traveller studies it with the eye of an artist or that of a naturalist.

On my arrival at Bastia, I found Salicetti there. He told me that he had been informed of my appointment, that he had put everything in training so

as to secure me a favourable reception, and that I might rely on his influence and that of his friends for the success of my mission. I expressed my gratitude for his zeal, but I was obliged to let him know that my instructions prescribed a different course of action from that which he had adopted. I told him that I could not introduce the Constitutional *régime* into the island without having first assured myself that the state of popular feeling and opinion would allow of its establishment without danger to the public tranquillity; and that I should therefore adjourn the meeting of the Primary Assemblies, and the exercise of the political rights of the inhabitants, until I should have acquired that assurance. And, indeed, such a delay was warranted by common prudence: it was evident that if the Constitutional system were suddenly adopted, authority would fall, without any counterpoise, into the hands of all those who, having left the island in order to escape from the influence of Paoli and of the English, were now returning in crowds, full of vengeance against such of their countrymen as, having taken the opposite side, had remained in the island, and were necessarily excluded from all public employment. Thus nothing could have been more detrimental to the end which I proposed to attain, that is to say, the effacement of those sharp divisions so as to blend them in submission to the Constitutional system, than an attempt

to establish that system in the midst of so much enmity and so many ardent passions. Salicetti admitted that this system might have some advantages, but he looked on it as a mark of weakness on the part of the Directory. He thought that conciliatory dealings with men, who, according to him, had betrayed their country and the cause of Liberty, was a sort of concession likely to disgust patriots and occasion more internal difficulties than it would prevent. General Gentili, a most upright man, and raised by his high character and his social position above every suspicion of intrigue, was in favour, on the contrary, of the course that I proposed adopting, and which, in fact, I could not relinquish without deviating from the intentions of the Government. I therefore decided on making known at once by a proclamation,* which I published on the 24th Frimaire, year V. (December 14, 1796), my arrival in the island, and the course I intended to pursue. A few days afterwards, Salicetti left Bastia, to return to the continent, and I was then enabled to exercise freely the authority confided to me.

Before entering into details of my operations, I will devote a few lines to the political situation of the island at the time of my arrival. This is necessary in order that a correct estimate of my conduct may be formed.

* This proclamation appears in the 'Moniteur,' of the 19th Nivôse, year V.

The inhabitants of Corsica may be represented, at the time of my arrival there, as divided into three classes : first, that of the Republicans who had taken refuge in France and were then returning to their native country, with claims to the national gratitude, and to demand indemnity for the losses they had sustained ; secondly, that of the inhabitants who had remained on the island, but had not been employed by the English in any public capacity, and many of whom had been ill-treated on account of the attachment to France which they often manifested ; and, thirdly, that of the partisans of Paoli, who had served the English and taken advantage of the period of their supremacy to enrich themselves, and to plunder or devastate the property of their absent fellow-citizens.

It behoved us to adapt ourselves to a people composed of such opposite elements, and above all to prevent collisions between them ; and it was therefore necessary to renounce the idea of any settlement which would have brought individual interests into opposition, in a country where public spirit had no existence and where those interests predominated over all others. I had already acted in this sense, by suspending all popular meetings ; and to this preliminary measure I added another, which was dictated by prudence. On proclaiming a general amnesty, I was careful not to mention the exceptions which the Exe-

cutive Directory had made to this act of clemency. These comprised, first, the deputies who had carried the crown of Corsica to the King of England in London; * secondly, the members of the Council of the Viceroy; † thirdly, the *émigrés* who were described as such on the lists of the Departments. But as these exceptions were meaningless as regards the two first-named classes, none of the individuals composing them being at that time in the island, so that, consequently, they could only fall on the third, I soon perceived how dangerous and impolitic it would be to make them known. Indeed, the emigration had but ~~been~~ taken place at the time when Paoli, who had been recalled to his country by a decree of the Constituent Assembly ‡ came back to the island, where he seized

* This deputation, consisting of four persons, fulfilled its mission in October 1794. The King of England had been recognised as King of Corsica by the Constitution of June 19, 1794 (see Chapters xi. and xii. of that Constitution). Corsica had been handed over to the English on May 21, 1794, in virtue of a capitulation concluded with Admiral Hood, and signed by Stephen Monti, President of the Department of Corsica, John Baptist Galeazzini, Mayor of Bastia, Charles François Emmanuel Couthaud and John Baptist Franceschi, adjutants-general of the French army.

† Sir Gilbert Elliot. He was at first Lieutenant of the king in Corsica, and afterwards received the title and authority of Viceroy. He was assisted by a Council of State, consisting in great measure of Corsicans. Paoli was a member of the Council.

‡ This decree is dated November 30, 1789. Paoli returned to Corsica as a simple citizen only; but the ascendancy he exercised over his countrymen rendered him virtually sovereign. The National Convention decreed an indictment against him on

the reins of power, and, by violence and threats, forced all those who would not recognise his authority or serve his projects, to expatriate themselves.

How was it possible, then, to inflict the terrible penalties adjudged against the *émigrés*, on those who had only fled from the tyranny of a man who had seized on illegitimate power, and at the same time, by a verbal equivoque, to pardon those who had supported the usurper, and afterwards aided him in selling part of the territory of the Republic to England? This omission, for which I was not censured by the Government, facilitated my first operations, and though it gave rise to discontent among those pretended patriots who were already casting their eyes on the property of the *émigrés*, that they might indemnify themselves for the losses they had sustained, it was generally acknowledged as well done, and I obtained the confidence of the public by means of it.*

April 2, 1793, and on the 17th of the following July declared him a traitor to the country. Paoli revenged himself by delivering the Island of Corsica to the English, who soon abandoned it, and merely offered him a refuge in London, where he died on February 3, 1807.

* I ought, however, to state that, just as the Primary Assemblies were about to meet, that is to say, on 1st Germinal, I consented, on the representations of the Central Administration of the Department of Golo, to have these exceptions put in force against some few persons included in them, in order to avert the disturbances which their presence would not have failed to excite in the Primary Assemblies. For this severity I was denounced; with how little reason I have already shown.

I could not, however, prevent some insurrectionary movements which took place in a part of the island known by the name of Balanga.* These movements, set on foot by some former partisans of England who considered themselves not sufficiently guaranteed by the recent amnesty, had assumed a rather serious character.† I felt the necessity of suppressing them promptly by an immediate expedition, and as, to my great regret, the health of General Gentili did not allow him to take the command, I determined to proceed in person to the spot with Adjutant-General Franceschi, who directed the military movements. The rapidity of our march, and our unexpected arrival at Alziprato, a Capuchin Convent, situated in the mountains, and which was the centre of the insurrection, immediately dispersed the rebels, with whom we exchanged a few shots only. Order was quickly re-established. By a further proclamation, which I published at Calvi the 21st Nivôse, I calmed the fears of the inhabitants respecting the consequences of these seditious risings, and thenceforth tranquillity was restored. Nor was it interrupted for a single moment during the remainder of my stay in Corsica.

* Roussa, a harbour on the west coast of Corsica, is the capital of this province.

† A report had also been spread that the French were about to abandon Corsica, and that the English were bringing back Paoli with a considerable force.

Having strengthened and consolidated my position by the success of this expedition, I returned to Bastia, and occupied myself exclusively with the civil organisation of the country, beginning with the department of Golo, in which I resided.* Profiting by the information which I had acquired in the course of a month, I had, before my departure for Calvi, nominated the individuals to compose the central administration of this department, so that, had my absence been prolonged, the town and department would have been provided with a regular government. The new administrators had completely justified my confidence, and I ascertained during my journey that my selection of men was generally approved. This first success was encouraging, and I believed that I ought no longer to delay the organisation of the law-courts, which was now urgently required. I proceeded therefore to instal the judges I had appointed by a decree of the 16th Nivôse, year V. (January 5, 1797), and also, by decrees passed on the 6th Pluviôse (January 26) to institute the Tribunal of Commerce, the Municipalities, and the Magistrature, in the different cantons. A regular order of things being thus established in the department without opposition, I ceded to the

* Corsica was then divided into two departments, Golo and Liamone, the names of the two principal rivers by which they are respectively watered.

administrations and tribunals, in succession, the powers I had exercised extraordinarily, and I prepared to leave the department of Golo for that of Liamone, of which Ajaccio is the capital.

I left Bastia on the 10th Pluviôse (January 29). I first crossed the beautiful plain which extends from Bastia, north and south, to the banks of the Golo. Thence a road, excellent throughout its whole length, made since the conquest, leads to Corte up the valley of the Golo, which is crossed by a very fine bridge at about thirty miles from Corte.

The variety of a landscape which at every step assumes a new aspect, renders the road from the point at which the traveller reaches the river, until he arrives at Corte, very agreeable; but it has the drawback of passing through no inhabited parts, it merely skirts villages on the right and left without entering them. The mania of making the directest and shortest roads had been imported from France into Corsica by the engineers, very skilful men no doubt, who had made this one, and a road, which by a circuit of perhaps two or three miles would have given life to several villages, has been of no service to civilisation, whose progress it would undoubtedly have accelerated, had it been constructed on a different plan.

The town of Corte, situated at the foot of the mountains in the centre of Corsica, contains from

three to four thousand inhabitants. The houses of which it consists are scattered over several low hills, and present no regularity of aspect. Its situation is wonderfully picturesque: two rivers, or rather two torrents, celebrated for the clearness of their waters, the Tavignano and the Restonica, the latter uniting with the former,* water the surrounding country. Its air is healthy at all seasons, and its situation had caused it to be selected as the seat of the Administration when the island consisted of only one Department. The English during their occupation had also appointed it as the residence of the Viceroy, and the seat of the Corsican Parliament. But since the return of the French, and the division of the island into two Departments, Corte had lost all its former importance. I stayed there for two days, and after settling some business, I left the town for Ajaccio.

The carriage-road at that time ended at Corte, and from thence as far as the coasts of the Gulf of Ajaccio, there were but narrow pathways which were barely practicable on horseback. The department of Golo is separated from that of Liamone by the lofty chain of mountains situate in the centre of the island, and from which rise the two peaks of Monte Rotondo

* Both these torrents descend from Monte Rotondo, and, united under the name of the Tavignano, flow into the sea near Aleria, the ancient Alalia, founded, according to Herodotus, by the Phocians.

and Monte d' Oro, which both reach a height of between 1300 and 1400 fathoms above the level of the sea. This chain is traversed by a passage, called Foce di Guizzavona, which may be perhaps 400 fathoms above the level of the sea.

It becomes impracticable at times from the accumulation of snow, and is frequently even dangerous during the terrible storms so common in the Alps, and to which the mountains of Corsica are equally liable.

The passage was free at the time of my arrival, and I had full opportunities of admiring the wild and magnificent landscape spread out before me. The slopes of the Col, on the side of Vivario, a village situated at the foot of the Foce, and from whence the ascent of the sides of the mountain begins, are, as well as those that lead down towards the Gulf of Ajaccio, clothed with most beautiful vegetation, almost wholly with the kind of pine special to Corsica, the Pino Caricia (*pinus pinaster*). This magnificent tree sometimes attains a height of more than 720 feet, and in the distribution of its branches and the beauty of its leaf, is rivalled, among the numerous family of pines, only by the Cedar of Lebanon, or Lord Weymouth's Pine-tree (*pinus strobus*) when growing in their native soil. The Col properly so called, or the Foce di Guizzavona, consists of a flat table-land which may be half a mile in length by about a quarter in width.

A tower, with a facing and moat, which forms a little fortress, has been erected there and is sometimes occupied by a small garrison for the purpose either of watching over the safety of travellers, or in times of disturbance of supporting military expeditions into the mountains, and preserving communications between the northern and southern parts of the island. This little fort was deserted and almost in ruins when I passed through the Col, but I had it restored subsequently.

After the table-land has been crossed the descent commences, and from its southern extremity the waters fall into the Western Sea, which soon becomes visible through the trees, on the verge of the horizon. The mountain torrents rushing and bounding over granite rocks, the sound of their waters, the whistling of the wind as it shakes and bends the gigantic trunks of the pine-trees, all give a charm to the descent which make the traveller forget the fatigue and danger of a path which is safe only for the Corsican horse and the mule. The spectacle was new and interesting to me and to most of my companions, and we arrived without accident at Bogognano, where the steep slope comes to an end. We were then eighteen miles from Ajaccio, and I reached that town on the 13th Pluviôse (February 1).

Before I entered the town, I saw a number of the

inhabitants, all of them on horseback, coming to welcome me according to the custom of the country. Among them was Joseph Buonaparte, the elder brother of the General. I met him with great eagerness. His mild and refined countenance, affable manners, and polished language, prepossessed me in his favour. I may say, that I date from this our first meeting the sincere affection I have ever entertained for him, and which the intimacy which subsequently existed between us has only served to strengthen and increase. I attached myself to him, as will be seen, in all the different phases of his fortune ; and his friendship has been the reward of my fidelity.

So long as I was settled, I occupied myself unremittingly with the organisation of the department of which Ajaccio is the chief place. I met with fewer difficulties than in the department of Golo. The confidence I felt in M. Joseph Buonaparte greatly alleviated my labours ; I followed his advice in the various appointments I had to make, and I have had reason to congratulate myself on the result. Every nomination that I made by his counsel has been since confirmed by the approbation of the public. Nevertheless, although my selection of persons was complete within a week after my arrival at Ajaccio, I did not think it well to make the list known until I had inspected the greater

portion of the department. I wished to collect on the spot information respecting the persons whom I proposed to appoint to various offices. I wished especially to profit by the judgment of General Gentili on so important a matter. He had preceded me to Ajaccio, and had agreed to accompany me on the journey I intended to make into the interior as far as Bonifacio. I bade a temporary adieu to M. Joseph Buonaparte, who remained at Ajaccio, and started on the 19th Pluviôse (February 8) for Sartena.

The district through which I had to pass in order to reach Bonifacio is one of the most uncultivated in Corsica. Entirely separated from the great line of communication existing between Bastia and Ajaccio, lying away from the route of any traveller, it retains traces of the character of its ancient inhabitants, and, like Niolo and Fiumorbo, districts also placed beyond the reach of intercourse, it has not benefited by the progress which civilisation has made in the other cantons, especially in the towns on the sea-coast.

Before reaching Sartena * I passed through several villages where hereditary feuds, which had originated more than fifty years back, divided the inhabitants into parties constantly hostile to one another. Houses with battlemented walls, for the purpose of defence against the attacks of an enemy, and from

* My route lay through Cauro-Ornano, Santa Maria d' Istria, where there exists a branch of the house of Colonna, and Sartena.

which the indwellers only issued in armed gangs in order to procure provisions and making preparations for enduring a siege, proclaimed a continual state of warfare in many villages. Meanwhile these singular people had suspended hostilities by formal treaties in honour of my arrival; the chiefs of the warring factions came together to meet me, and each solicited my preference of himself as a host eager to afford me hospitality. Had I been induced to make a choice, it would have been a fresh cause of quarrel between them; so that I did not accept the invitation of either of the rivals in any instance, but generally took up my residence in the house of some less wealthy person, where I did not, it is true, meet with so splendid a reception, but whose owner holding himself in a neutral attitude inspired no jealousy in the dominant families; or, if this resource failed me, I would lodge in one of the Capuchin Monasteries.* These were the only Religious houses established in the interior of the island, and a few of them were still in existence. The poverty of the ^{and} country had never attracted thither the sons of Benedict and Bernard; the Jesuits only had braved this inhospitable soil; the Society had an establishment at Ajaccio.

* This is the course I adopted in travelling from Bastia to Ajaccio; when the two principal families of that district, the Vivaldis and the Peraldis, fired on each other in their dispute as to which should have the honour of entertaining me.

My journey into the interior, which gave me a clearer idea of the habits and character of Corsicans than I had until then acquired, was also rendered memorable by a remarkable circumstance. At a short distance from Sartena, I was joined by a courier who had been despatched to me from the Army of Italy, to announce the surrender of Mantua on the 14th Pluviôse (February 3). This courier, not finding me at Ajaccio, had followed in my footsteps, and came up with me on the road, in a very wild spot, which soon re-echoed with the joyful shouts of our little caravan. No piece of news could, in truth, be more welcome to me; while the fall of Mantua made our conquests in Italy secure, and was a presage of those which followed and which extended our rule over the remainder of the peninsula; it also rendered my arduous mission less difficult, and gave me, so to speak, a pledge of its success.

After remaining half a day at Sartena, I arrived at Bonifacio on the 22nd Pluviôse (February 10). This town, situated at the southern extremity of Corsica, is built on a chalk cliff which projects over the Straits of Bonifacio, from east to west, and separates the port, formed by a deep inland bay, from the open sea. Its situation, which is wonderfully picturesque, gives it the command of the channel and the islands which traverse it in various directions, and also of Sardinia, whose nearest village,

Lungo-Sardo, is so near that a current saying in the country, is : " the inhabitants of Bonifacio are awaked by the crowing of the cocks of Sardinia." There are remarkable grottoes along the shore, into which the sea flows : these grottoes deserve the notice of travellers, on account of the beauty of the stalactites, produced by infiltrations of chalk from the soil above, which hang from their roof.

I was very well received by the inhabitants, and I found the people generally well-disposed towards the Government. I passed three days at Bonifacio, where I had to regulate some affairs of local interest ; after these were settled, I began to think of returning to Ajaccio as quickly as possible. The journey that I had just accomplished by land was fatiguing and long ; the sea offered a quicker mode ; it was calm, the wind was favourable and, by keeping near the coast during the night, there would be little to fear from any English vessels which might be cruising in the neighbourhood. I therefore decided on embarking with General Gentili on the 24th Pluviôse, in the evening. The next morning we doubled Cape Mulo, and entered the Gulf of Ajaccio, where I landed in the afternoon. On the same day I published the regulations for the organisation of the Central government and the tribunals of the department of Liamone. I installed the appointed officers on the 27th Pluviôse (February 15), and on

the 28th a public fête took place in honour of the surrender of Mantua. Prizes were distributed for horse-races and gondola-races with oars. These contests, of which the Corsicans are very fond, attracted a crowd of spectators from the mountains, who came to the show in their national costume. The weather was superb, and the view from the Gulf of Ajaccio, which, as I have since convinced myself, is greater in extent than that of Naples, was truly magnificent.

All that I had to do was now accomplished, and the administration was in regular working order; so that I did not require to prolong my stay at Ajaccio, where I left men and things in a satisfactory state. On the 2nd Ventôse (February 28) I set out on my return to Bastia; and, as I adopted the same route as in coming to Ajaccio, I have nothing more to say about it.

I stayed another month in Corsica, in order to superintend the first steps of the Government I had established there. But, as my mission naturally came to an end on the 1st Germinal, year V. (March 21, 1797), the period at which, according to the constitution of year III., the Primary Assemblies were to be held, and to confirm or annul by their votes the appointments made by me, I did not wish to prolong my stay beyond that date. By taking my departure, I avoided, on the one hand, the ap-

pearance of putting pressure on the popular choice, and, on the other, responsibility for any disturbance which the first exercise of their political rights might occasion among a people in whom, notwithstanding all my efforts, the spirit of party was not completely extinguished. I was resolved therefore to relinquish all my functions on the 1st Germinal, and I had arranged to meet Joseph Buonaparte at the beginning of the month, and cross with him to the mainland. I took advantage of the time which still remained to me on the island to gather together and put in order the documents I had collected during my stay, and from which I drew up a report addressed to the Minister of the Interior on the state of Corsica, its productions, its trade, and its industries; and also on the habits and character of its inhabitants.

CHAPTER VI.

The Author leaves Corsica with Joseph Buonaparte, goes to Florence, and from thence to Milan—He visits General Buonaparte, then residing with his family at Montebello, after a brilliant campaign terminated by the treaty of Tolentino—The peace preliminaries of Leoben and the transformation of the Governments of Venice and Genoa—Lukewarm Republicanism of the General—A remarkable conversation in which Buonaparte reveals his future plans—The Author goes to Turin—Political situation of Piedmont and its Government—Embarrassment caused to the Author by the secret agents maintained in Piedmont by the Directory with revolutionary objects—The Sardinian Government, supported by Buonaparte, displays excessive severity in putting down the partial insurrections in Piedmont—The Author goes to Milan to have an interview with Buonaparte—Situation of the different parties in the Directory and the Councils in Paris before the *Coup d'État* of the 18th Fructidor—Buonaparte decides on supporting the Revolutionary party—The Author accompanies General and Madame Buonaparte in an expedition to Lake Maggiore—He returns to Turin after having agreed with the General upon the course he is to take there—The 18th Fructidor—Its consequences as regarded the position of the Sardinian Government, which, as a result of the treaty of Campo-Formio, found itself deprived of Buonaparte's support—The Directory separates the General

from the Army of Italy by giving him a command in the interior—Buonaparte, in going to Rastadt, passes through Turin—His conversation with the Author—The position of the Sardinian Government becomes more and more precarious.

At the end of the month of Ventôse, Joseph Buonaparte joined me at Bastia, and on the 8th Germinal we embarked to return to the mainland. We had to stop at Capraja, in order to evade the English cruiser, and we left the island in the night of the 10th–11th Germinal in very stormy weather. Favoured by the darkness and a strong wind, we reached Leghorn in less than four hours. I went to Florence, where I had to wait for the papers concerning my nomination to the embassy of Turin. I did not receive them until the end of the month of Floréal; my letters of credit and instructions awaiting me at Turin.

I left Florence on the 10th Prairial (May 29) for Milan, where I remained for several days in order to see General Buonaparte, and to consult with him on the new functions I was about to exercise.

At this epoch Buonaparte seemed to have attained to the zenith of military glory. The fall of Mantua had set him free to march on Rome, and if the treaty of Tolentino,* signed on the 1st Ventôse (February 19, 1797) had not re-established peace

* It was only after this treaty that the articles of the armistice, relative to the cession of the art objects, were executed.

between the Republic and the Holy See, the ancient capital of the world would have been occupied by a French army. But not only did Buonaparte wish to spare the Pope, but policy forbade the pursuance of a campaign which would remove the French from Upper Italy, where they had to fight a new Austrian army commanded by the Archduke Charles, and it was with reason that Buonaparte said, "If I went to Rome I should lose Milan." Thus, after his short expedition into the Romagna, rapidly retracing his steps, he crossed the Tagliamento and the Isonza, pursued the Austrian army, which was flying before him, into Carniola and Styria, and arrived at the gates of Vienna. Austria, in great alarm, asked for an armistice, which was granted her on the 18th Germinal (April 7) at Judenbourg, and signed preliminaries at Leoben the 26th (15th) of the same month. In returning to Italy, after arranging this treaty, which had become as necessary to France as to Austria, on account of the insurrection against the French that had just broken out in the States of Venice, Buonaparte avenged his country for the perfidy of the Venetian Senate by overthrowing for ever that formidable oligarchy, which had maintained itself for so many centuries, in the midst of the political convulsions and wars that had ravaged Italy. As the conqueror of four Austrian armies, Buonaparte, the destroyer of the most ancient government

of Europe, came back to Milan, where he received the deputies of the people of Venice, dictated to them his laws, and established an absolute Democracy* on the ruins of the Senate and the Grand Council, which had sent in their resignation. He had at this time been barely a year in Italy.

He then settled himself down at Montebello,† where conferences commenced by a definitive treaty of peace concluded between France and Austria, and where the affairs of Genoa were discussed at the same time. Intimidated by the example of Venice, Genoa consented, like her rival, to renounce her ancient organisation.‡

I was received by Buonaparte, at the magnificent residence of Montebello, on the 13th Prairial (June 1), in the midst of a brilliant court rather than the headquarters of an army. Strict etiquette already reigned around him ; his aides-de camp and his officers were no longer received at his table, and he had become fastidious in the choice of the guests whom he admitted to it. An invitation

* This treaty is of the 16th Floréal, year V. (May 5, 1797).

† Château and park about four miles from Milan.

‡ The convention which regulated the affairs of Genoa, signed by Buonaparte and Faipoult, then Minister of the Republic at Genoa, bears date the 17th and 18th Prairial (June 5 and 6, 1797). It is signed for the Genoese by Michel-Ange Cambiaso, Louis Carbonara, and Jerome François-Serra.

was an honour eagerly sought, and obtained with great difficulty. He dined, so to speak, in public; the inhabitants of the country were admitted to the room in which he was eating, and allowed to gaze at him with a keen curiosity. He was in no wise embarrassed or confused by these excessive honours, but received them as though he had been accustomed to them all his life. His reception-rooms and an immense tent pitched in front of the palace were constantly full of a crowd of generals, administrators, and great contractors; besides members of the highest nobility, and the most distinguished men in Italy, who came to solicit the favour of a momentary glance or the briefest interview. In a word, all bowed before the glory of his victories and the haughtiness of his demeanour. He was no longer the General of a triumphant Republic, but a conqueror on his own account, imposing his laws on the vanquished.

Austria had sent two Plenipotentiaries to Montebello; one of them was Count de Meerfeld, and the other the Marquis de Gatto, ambassador from Naples to Vienna. The latter was afterwards ambassador to Paris, and Minister of Foreign Affairs, under the successive reigns of Joseph Buonaparte, king of Naples, and Murat, who succeeded him on that throne. On its side, the Directory had sent to Buonaparte General Clarke (afterwards Duc de Feltre), who had

on the 16th of the preceding Germinal concluded a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, between the French Republic and the King of Sardinia. Jealous of the preponderance, or rather of the absolute independence that Buonaparte affected in the conduct of political affairs, and uneasy at his ambition which was already showing itself without disguise, the Directory had contrived this appointment under the pretext of assisting General Buonaparte, but in reality to place a spy on his designs and provide a counterpoise for his authority. But an expedient of this sort was not likely to succeed with such a man as Buonaparte. He saw through the intentions of the Government at once, and, far from giving his colleague a share in the conduct of the negotiations, he concealed their progress from him more closely than from any other person, and Clarke was positively, of all the negotiators then at Montebello, the individual in whom Buonaparte confided the least.

Such was the state of things when Buonaparte, to whom I had written on arriving at Milan, invited me, though Bourienne (who for some time past had been his private secretary), to come and see him at Montebello, where he even proposed that I should establish myself. This offer I refused, in order not to be separated from my family, who were with me, and besides, the distance between Milan and Monte-

bello was sufficiently short to enable me to come and go every day.

In addition to the persons whom I have already mentioned, as either living at Montebello or coming there regularly, I met Madame Buonaparte, the General's wife; Madame Lætitia Buonaparte, his mother, who had just arrived from Genoa; his brothers Joseph and Louis, the latter then very young; his sister Pauline, who was shortly afterwards married to General Leclerc, and Fesch his uncle. Fesch had at that time an interest in the army supplies, and, according to rumour, had little of the priest about him; he did not even wear clerical costume, although he had been Grand Vicar to the Bishop of Ajaccio. In this numerous society I frequently met Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angely, whom up to that time I had known only by the reputation he had acquired in the Constituent Assembly, and soon became intimate with him. He had official employment connected with the hospitals, but he had attracted Buonaparte's attention by his editing of a French journal which came out at Milan. He displayed rare facility, as well as remarkable talent, as an editor, and to this circumstance, which frequently brought him in contact with the General, he owed his subsequent fortune.

In the first conversation that I had with Buonaparte at Montebello, and which began with the

subject of my Corsican mission, in which he thought I had acquitted myself well, I saw, so soon as he touched on more important topics, that he had by no means decided upon treating definitively with Austria, and still less upon promoting the negotiation or concluding it promptly. He recognised all the advantages of the position he had acquired, and feared that peace might change it. This actually happened after the treaty of Campo-Formio. He seemed to me to hold the negotiators the Emperor had sent him cheap, and made some very bitter jests at their expense. He took especial care to tell me that Clarke, whom the Directory had chosen to associate with him, was there merely for form's sake, that he had no influence, and never received any communication.

"He is a spy," he added, "whom the Directory have set upon me; besides, Clarke is a man of no talent—he is only conceited."*

I perfectly recognised by what he said at our first interview, and in all my subsequent conversations with him during my stay at Milan, the same views and the same designs that I had detected in our previous interviews at Brescia, Bologna, and Florence. In a word, I still found in Buonaparte a man thoroughly opposed to Republican forms

* Nevertheless, he afterwards raised Clarke to the highest dignities.

and ideas; he treated everything of the sort as idle dreams.

He withdrew the mask more completely on a certain occasion, which I cannot pass over in silence.

Among the crowd which surrounded and followed him eagerly, I observed that he particularly distinguished M. de Melzi, a Milanese noble, and one of the most enlightened and honourable citizens of Lombardy.* I happened to be with him one day at Montebello, and Buonaparte invited us both to walk with him in the vast gardens of that beautiful palace. Our walk lasted about two hours, during which time the General talked almost incessantly, and either the confidence with which we inspired him led him to reveal his mind undisguisedly, or he was carried away by the longing he frequently experienced to give expression to the ideas crowding upon his brain to the first comer. He spoke with entire frankness of his projects for the future.

"What I have done up to this," he said, "is nothing. I am only at the beginning of the course I must run. Do you imagine that I triumph in Italy

* M. de Melzi d'Eril (afterwards Duke of Lodi) was subsequently named Vice-president of the Italian Republic, and when, in 1805, that Republic was changed into a kingdom, he received the title of "Chancellor-Keeper of the Seals of the Crown." I had known him at Florence (see note, page 102), and I saw him again, a few years later, at Paris. He died in 1816.

in order to aggrandise the pack of lawyers who form the Directory, and men like Carnot and Barras? What an idea! a Republic of thirty million men! and with our manners, our vices! how is it possible? That is a fancy of which the French are at present full, but it will pass away like all the others. What they want is Glory and gratified Vanity; but as for Liberty, they do not understand what it means. Look at the army! the victories we have just won have already restored the French soldier to his true character. To him, I am everything. Let the Directory try to take the command from me, and they will see who is master. The nation must have a chief, and a chief rendered illustrious by glory, not by theories of government, by phrases, by theoretic speeches, which Frenchmen do not understand. Give them baubles—that suffices them; they will be amused and will let themselves be led, so long as the end towards which they are going is skilfully hidden from them.

“As for your country, Monsieur de Melzi, it possesses still fewer elements of Republicanism than France, and can be more easily managed than any other. You know better than any one that we shall do what we like with Italy. But the time has not yet come; we must temporise with the fever of the moment, and we are going to have one or two Republics here of our own particular kind—Monge will

arrange that for us. In the meantime I have already expunged two from Italian territory, and although they were quite aristocratic Republics, they had more public spirit and more fixed opinions than we found anywhere else. They would in the end have hampered us. For the rest, I am quite determined. I will not give up either Lombardy or Mantua to Austria. You may reckon upon that" (he was still addressing himself to M. de Melzi), "and you see that, whatever decision we arrive at with respect to your country, you may enter into my views without having anything to fear either from the return or the power of Austria. I will give her Venice, and a portion of the terra firma of that ancient Republic as an indemnification."

We both together exclaimed against such a proposition, which would once more set Austria at the gates of Italy, and crush all the hopes of a population which he himself had freed from the yoke of an odious oligarchy, only to transfer them to an absolute monarchy, which would hold them in a no less intolerable slavery than that from which he had just delivered them. He answered that we need not cry out before we were hurt.

"I shall not do that," he continued, "unless, by some blunder in Paris, I am compelled to make peace; for it is not my intention to finish so promptly with Austria. Peace is not to my interest.

You see what I am, and what I can now do in Italy. If peace is made, if I am no longer at the head of the army, which is attached to me, I must renounce the power, the high position I have made for myself, in order to pay court to a lot of lawyers at the Luxembourg. I do not want to leave Italy, unless it be to play a part in France similar to my part here, and the time has not yet come; the pear is not ripe. But the management of all this does not depend exclusively on me. There are disagreements in Paris. One party is in favour of the Bourbons; I do not intend to contribute to its triumph. I am quite ready to weaken the Republican party; some day I shall do it for my own advantage, not that of the former dynasty. In the meantime I must act with the Republican party. And then, if peace be necessary in order to satisfy our Paris boobies, and if it has to be made, it is my task to make it. If I left the merit of it to another, such a concession would place him higher in public favour than all my victories have placed me."

The foregoing contains the substance and the most remarkable expressions of this long allocution, which I both consigned to paper, and retain in my memory.

After the General had left us, I continued to converse with M. de Melzi, during our return.

journey to Milan, on the serious subjects he had suggested to us.

In my final conversation with Buonaparte, the mission I was about to undertake at Turin was discussed.

The General assured me (and the sequel has proved that he was not insincere) that he had no intention of disturbing Piedmont, and that I might give ample assurance that such was the case; but he added that he could not be answerable for the intentions of the Executive Directory in this respect, surrounded as it was by schemers, who would not fail to stir up dissensions in the country.

He said enough, on the whole, to make me feel that my mission would be a difficult one.

At last, after spending a week at Milan, I left that city for Turin. I crossed the Ticino on the 21st Prairial, and on the right bank of the river I found a detachment of cavalry which the Government had sent forward to meet me. It escorted me to Turin, where I arrived the next day, the 22nd Prairial, year V. (June 10, 1797).

I shall now endeavour to describe the political situation of the country, and the government to which I was accredited.

The peace concluded with the King of Sardinia on the 26th Floréal, year V. (May 15, 1796), ensuing on the victories of the French in the early

months of the same year had saved the Court of Turin from complete ruin. Victor Amadeus III., who had concluded the treaty, died a few months after its ratification, October the 16th, 1796 (26th Vendémiaire, year V.). His son Charles Emmanuel IV. had succeeded him, and had hastened to appoint an ambassador to the Executive Directory in Paris, in the person of Count Prosper de' Balbi. My appointment to the same post at the Court of the King of Sardinia had immediately followed. Independently of these reciprocal marks of a friendly understanding between the two Governments, negotiations had been commenced with a view to a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, between France and Piedmont, and one of the conditions was the cession of the island of Sardinia to France, in exchange for an increase of territory in Italy.* General Clarke had been entrusted with these negotiations, and he found the dispositions of the Cabinet of Turin favourable. On the one hand, that Cabinet was displeased with Austria for her desertion of it in the hour of danger,† and on the other, the fear lest France might support the revolutionary

* This stipulation was not contained in the treaty itself, but in a secret convention signed on the same day.

† The King of Sardinia and the Emperor had concluded a treaty of alliance, signed at Valenciennes on May 23, 1794, by Baron de Thugut and the Marquis d'Albany. The conditions of this treaty were ill-observed by Austria.

projects of certain Piedmontese subjects, held the Sardinian Government in bondage to France, and made it ardently desire an alliance, which would be, in reality, a guarantee of its existence.

These negotiations which, it might be thought, would, under such favouring circumstances, advance rapidly, hung fire for several months. Buonaparte, who was informed of the delay, pressed for a conclusion, in order to get hold of the contingent which Piedmont was bound by one of the articles of the treaty to furnish, and which would have been of considerable use to him. He even asked the Sardinian Government to anticipate the conclusion of the treaty, and to order to Novara the troops which were to be added to the French army when the *casus fœderis* should take place. But he asked in vain. The treaty was eventually signed at Turin on the 16th Germinal, year V. (April 5, 1797), between General Clarke, Plenipotentiary of France, and the Count de Prioca (Clement Damiano), Plenipotentiary of the King of Sardinia and his Minister for Foreign Affairs.

By this time, however, the importance that might have attached to the men and guns which the treaty placed at the disposition of the French Commander-in-Chief, had ceased to exist.

Buonaparte was already in the heart of Styria, and he affixed his signature at Leoben to the prelimi-

naries of peace with Austria nearly on the same day as that on which the treaty, which gave a new enemy to the Court of Vienna, was signed at Turin.* The time had gone by, and the Directory, which then wished to conciliate Austria so as to facilitate a definitive peace, showed no haste in proposing the ratification of the recently-concluded treaty to the Legislative Councils. The Court of Turin relapsed into its former anxieties, which were daily increased by the revolutionary movements then disturbing Italy and penetrating into Piedmont, where secret agents employed by the Executive Directory were disseminating a spirit of revolt, and the first germs of those disturbances which broke out shortly afterwards.

In allying itself with the French Republic, the Court of Turin was far from embracing or condoning the principles of the French Revolution. Fear alone had induced it to form that alliance, and the Government continued to treat all in the Sardinian States who showed any favour to those principles, or appeared as their partisans, with extreme severity. Barbarous executions had just taken place in Sardinia, in consequence of disturbances in the island. All persons who evinced friendship for France and her institutions were prosecuted, ban-

* The preliminaries of Leoben are dated 18th Germinal (April 7).

ished, and dismissed from public employment, and the surest method of incurring disgrace with the Sardinian Government was to show friendship to its new ally, or to rejoice in the triumphs of France.

On the other hand, the Executive Directory, which at the beginning would perhaps have desired to establish its power on principles of moderation, was led away by that extreme party within it which was urging Revolution on all the Italian States. This party, owing to the victory which it obtained shortly afterwards, on the 18th Fructidor, acquired the mastery and grasped the whole direction of affairs. On neither side, therefore, was there any guarantee of lasting harmony between two Governments so utterly opposed in their views. Buonaparte alone desired tranquillity for Piedmont. He was resolved to permit neither disturbance nor agitation on his rear, and he deprecated equally any movements that might take place, either for or against political revolution, in a country which he desired to maintain in quietude, so as to afford him, whatever happened, a secure and easy retreat.

It was not, however, in his power to put a stop to the intrigues of numerous agents who were personally unknown to him, and who had a central rendezvous in Paris. The Executive Directory, moreover, began seriously to dread Buonaparte's ascendancy

in Italy, and the totally independent attitude he had assumed since the preliminaries at Leoben, and was therefore not unwilling to create difficulties for him. During this conflict, a twofold impulse was given to affairs; one, public and patent to all, by Buonaparte; the other, secret and disguised, by a party in the Directory and its obscure co-operators.

This state of things subsisted until the 18th Fructidor. Then Buonaparte, obliged to declare himself, supported the extreme party (in the revolutionary sense) in the Directory, so as to avoid supporting that party no less extreme in ideas, but much more timid in action, who desired the return of the Bourbons. It is not yet time for me to speak in detail of this event, and of its influence on the fate of Piedmont and of Italy. I have said enough to show that I took up my residence in Turin at a moment of difficulty, the greater because I could not know the real intentions of the Executive Directory, divided, as it was, into two factions, nor could I guess which of those factions would triumph. But being incapable by nature of dissimulation, and ignorant of the art of adroitly contriving a way out of the dilemma, whichever should be the triumphant party, I unhesitatingly adopted the line of conduct that seemed to accord best with the honour of the French name, that of proving my fidelity to the treaties, of refusing all countenance to agitators, whatever the

mask of patriotism they might assume, and holding myself altogether aloof from them.

Acting on these principles, I conformed at once to the customs of the country and of the Court to which I was accredited, however they might differ from those which the Revolution had introduced among ourselves. I carefully avoided any affectation of republican austerity in my manners or mode of life which might have been a cause of offence. It was at Turin that two Princesses, related by ties of blood to the King who had just ascended the throne, had sought a refuge.* I allayed the fears which my arrival at Turin had excited in his mind; their place of exile was respected, and I supported the request that Mademoiselle de Condé had made to the Directory, to be allowed to take up her abode in Piedmont.

The line of conduct that I adopted was one—as may be imagined—far from likely to win the confidence of the secret agents in the employ of the Directory. One of these, a certain Edward Maurin, represented the conduct of the Court of Turin in the most unfavourable light, and sought by every possible imputation to damage it with the French Government. Nor did he spare me either, but I

* The two daughters of Victor-Amadeus; one of whom had married the Comte de Provence (Louis XVIII.), and the other the Comte d'Artois (Charles X.).

must do the Minister of Exterior Relations the justice of saying that the tale-bearing of this person did not outweigh in his estimation those documents which he received from a purer source. In his report to the Executive Directory, dated 1st Germinal, year V., he declared that, since the new King's accession, the conduct of the Turin Cabinet had been frank and irreproachable.

Meanwhile, my endeavours to maintain tranquillity in the country by refusing all countenance to those who were incessantly seeking to promote revolution were powerless to arrest the evil. Secret machinations, directed from Paris, exposed the public peace to constant danger, and the alarm of the Piedmontese Government increased daily, especially as it could not conceal from itself that the middle classes inclined towards a change of political system which would, at the least, have converted the absolute into a constitutional monarchy. In Buonaparte alone, up to this time, had the Court of Turin felt any confidence; but, notwithstanding the assurances which he continued to give, the changes that had taken place at Genoa, and the establishment of the Cisalpine Republic, whose constitution was at this very moment being discussed under the General's eyes, rendered the position of a monarchical State very precarious, surrounded, as it soon would be, by Governments acting on opposite principles, and animated by ill-

concealed zeal for proselytism. The King, hoping to escape from so critical a position, had despatched M. de Saint-Marsan to General Buonaparte, and the former, by prudent conduct and very distinguished talent, inspired the General with confidence and regard, which Buonaparte, when he had become Emperor, felt for him to the last. M. de Saint-Marsan, in describing the position of the Turin Court, had little difficulty in convincing Buonaparte of the dangerous consequences to the French army, of an insurrection in Piedmont; and the General, who had not concluded with Austria, and had not as yet declared himself for either of the two parties in the Directory, perceived them at once. For whichever party he might decide, it was necessary that access to Piedmont and the passage of the Alps should be free and secure for the army, with which he must, in all cases, be in a position to threaten Paris. Therefore he had no hesitation in giving to M. de Saint-Marsan the strongest assurances of his friendly disposition towards the Court of Turin, and his satisfaction with the conduct of the Sardinian Government. At the same time he announced that he had caused several individuals, who, after preaching insurrection in Piedmont, had taken refuge in the Milanese territory, to be arrested. These assurances of friendship and, if we may say so, of avowed protection, are to be found in a despatch

of the 20th Messidor (July 8), addressed to M. de Saint-Marsan. The General sent me a copy of this despatch. The letter which he wrote to me, and which accompanied the despatch, ends with these words: "I own, my dear ambassador, that this letter" (one which M. de Saint-Marsan had taken to him) "has opened my eyes as to the affairs of Piedmont. Since they are so apprehensive, something must be going on that we do not know. I beg you to inform me precisely of the state of things and of the tone of popular feeling. You will understand that it is of the greatest importance that Piedmont should be tranquil, in order that my line of communication and the rear of my army may be secure."

The following is an extract from my reply, dated the 24th Messidor.

"It is certain that M. de Prioca's fears are, at any rate for the moment, exaggerated. But it is true, nevertheless, that the political changes which have taken place in the neighbouring States have revived the hopes of all who wish for a change particularly desired by the middle and best-educated class in Piedmont; but equally deprecated by the two extreme classes—the higher nobility and the clergy, on one hand, and the populace on the other. So long as we do not favour the Revolutionary party, there will be no revolution in Piedmont; at least, a singular and hitherto improbable concurrence of events

would be required to produce one spontaneously. It is then for you, General, to declare your mind strongly, because it is always you whom the Revolutionists put forward. But, above all, insist on the ratification of the treaty of alliance. That will be the best means of tranquillising the Cabinet of Turin."

However, neither the line taken by General Buonaparte, nor the pains I took to second it, had sufficient influence to arrest movements which received their impetus from another centre of action quite independent of us. Disturbances, instead of diminishing, increased with redoubled violence during the summer of 1797, notwithstanding the concessions which the Court of Turin had made to public opinion in the hope of preventing them, by abolishing feudal prerogatives by an edict of July 29 (11th Thermidor), which suppressed both entails and trusts.*

The Sardinian Government, however, being assured beforehand that the agitators had no support to expect from General Buonaparte, proceeded with great energy to put down partial insurrections in various places, and succeeded in doing so. But, like all weak Governments, which are always the most violent, it afterwards inflicted such severe, I may even say atrocious, punishments upon the insurgents,

* "*Les substitutions, et les fidéi-commis.*"

that I could not refrain from making some representations, upon the score of common humanity, in the hope of checking the course of the horrible executions that were daily taking place. This proceeding of mine was not well received by M. de Prioca, who complained of it in Paris, through the medium of M. de Balbi, as an interference with the internal administration of the kingdom, and it was equally disapproved by M. de Talleyrand, who had just entered the Ministry of Exterior Relations. Both these personages were perhaps formally in the right; but I the less regretted the step I had taken, because I understood that my representations did in the end convince the Sardinian Government of the need of greater moderation and a different course of action; and on the 24th of August a general amnesty was published. Buonaparte had written on the 15th Thermidor (August 2) to M. de Prioca, congratulating him on the fortunate issue to the crisis into which the last disturbances had thrown the Piedmontese Government. The Directory of the Cisalpine Republic, newly established at Milan, had formally informed the King of Sardinia of its installation, and the King recognised that Government and received an ambassador from the new Republic.

Thus the suppression of revolutionary movements in the interior of the country, the neutrality observed

by France during these disturbances, the congratulations of General Buonaparte on the success just achieved by the Sardinian Government, and the renewal of friendly relations between the Cisalpine Directory and the King of Sardinia, had all contributed to render the position of the Court of Turin better than it had been since the peace of the 26th Prairial, year IV. Quiet was restored for a time; there was, so to speak, a truce between the parties. But this state of things did not last long. A fresh storm, far more serious than any that had yet broken out, was gathering on the political horizon, and finally led rapidly to the ruin of the King of Sardinia. I will endeavour to narrate its causes and its various phases, such as they appeared to me from my point of view.

M. de Talleyrand, having been appointed by the Executive Directory to the Ministry of Exterior Relations, had entered on his office in the month of Thermidor, year V., and I received on the 12th of that month (July 30, 1797) an official intimation of his appointment. The reputation which the new Minister had acquired at different epochs of the Revolution and the fame of his diplomatic ability had preceded him to the post he was about to occupy. Thus I naturally expected that my new chief would maintain a correspondence with me at once more regular and more statesmanlike than that

which his predecessor had kept up. I hastened to lay the situation of the country before him, hoping to receive instructions for my guidance in the conduct of affairs, which would enable me to take a firmer attitude. But these hopes were disappointed; I received no answer to my communication, and, in fact, it soon became evident to me that M. de Talleyrand, observing the agitation in the Directory and Councils, and still uncertain which side he should take, hesitated to commit himself to any pronounced opinion in his political correspondence. Meanwhile, events were hastening on. The Cabinet of Turin, better informed than I as to what was taking place in Paris, began to flatter itself that the Royalist party of the Rue de Clichy was getting the upper hand, and would accomplish the restoration of the Bourbons. The hopes to which the possibility of such an event gave birth increased every day, and the Sardinian Government was already taking a tone of self-assertion in its dealings with us which it had not hitherto adopted.

From these various indications I foreboded an approaching crisis, but of what character I was unable to divine. As, however, I was persuaded that whatever its nature might be, Buonaparte would inevitably lay hold of it and up to a certain point direct it, because one of the two parties must necessarily turn to him to obtain his support, which neither could

do without, I resolved to go to him at Milan. I therefore accepted an invitation to visit him, which he made me before his departure for Udine, where the Conference for the peace with Austria was to be held. MM. de Meerfeld, de Gallo, and Clarke had already arrived there, and were awaiting the arrival of General Buonaparte. But he would not start until he had made certain arrangements at Milan, rendered necessary by coming events in Paris.

I left Turin on the 24th Thermidor (August 11), and reached Milan on the following day. I found Buonaparte established in the Serbelloni* Palace, and more occupied with Paris affairs than with the negotiations. During the week which I passed at Milan, I had frequent conversations with him, and I will here summarise their principal results.

The Executive Directory and the Legislative Councils were divided; a numerous section wished to restore the Bourbons; but this party was unsupported alike by public opinion and public sentiment. It was not even unanimous in its views; several members of the Clichy clique merely desired the overthrow of that portion of the Directory which had sprung from the Convention, but did not desire the restoration of the ancient dynasty. Among those who went farther, some

* Serbelloni, at that time President of the Directory of the Cis-Alpine Republic, resided in the Palace of the Government.

would only consent to a restoration under constitutional conditions ; others wanted a conditional restoration, and aspired, therefore, to a complete counter-revolution. The opposite side, which was composed of the former members of the Convention, and all those who had taken an active part in the events of the Revolution, had the advantage over its adversaries of being perfectly agreed upon its aim—the destruction by violent measures of the Royalist party ; postponing all dispute as to the distribution of authority until it should be reconquered. The people, tired of coups d'état, and of the frequent alternations of power, which for four years had been seized upon by opposite parties in turn, were not only neutral, but indifferent as to the result, and would be mere spectators of the new scenes that were being secretly arranged. Thus neither party could rely on the people, and consequently neither attempted to stir them up to action.

This, however, was not the case with the troops. Their influence must inevitably insure the success of the party for which they should pronounce, and therefore both parties sought their support. The Clichy party had intrigued with Pichegru and Moreau ; but although those generals, as subsequent events have sufficiently proved, declared themselves in its favour, they acted, there is no doubt, against the feeling of the soldiery, which at this time was distinctly

republican, and it was only by underhand means that they could hope, not indeed to bring them over to the side of the party they wished to serve, but, at best, to mislead and render them inactive during the struggle.

It was not thus with Buonaparte and the army of Italy, and on them the democratic party built all its hopes. Success was assured if those troops and their chiefs declared themselves in its favour, and nothing ought to be neglected to secure their support.

Talleyrand was the principal intermediary in the communications which were now established between this party and Buonaparte, and I found myself at Milan at the very moment when those communications were most active. The General had just formed his decision, for the following reasons, as I heard from his own lips.

Nothing could be more opposed to the projects he entertained than the recall of the Bourbons. That would ruin all the ambitious hopes, which he afterwards realised, and, judging from some documents found in a portfolio belonging to the Count d'Entraigues at the time of his arrest in Venice, no doubt could exist that their recall was the real object of the majority of the Clichy party.* Talley-

* This portfolio was opened at Montebello, 5th Prairial, year V. (May 24, 1797), by Berthier, in the presence of

rand also, who from personal motives was equally averse to the return of the ancient dynasty, strongly urged him to a course opposed to its recall. Other motives also, of a secondary nature, which were not, however, without influence on such a mind as his, contributed to inflame him. He would endure no military renown but his own; all other annoyed him. Carnot in the Directory was an offence; for the reputation he had acquired during the Convention by the ability he had displayed and the direction he had given to the war, he retained as a member of the Government. That which Moreau had made for himself with the army of the Rhine was no less repugnant to Buonaparte, who encouraged an angry rivalry between that army and the army of Italy, based chiefly upon the outward forms adopted in each. The army of Italy glorified in being a revolutionary and citizen body, while that of the Rhine passed for an army of *Messieurs*, as it was called

Buonaparte and Clarke. I do not know whether its contents were immediately forwarded to Paris, or whether Buonaparte held them in reserve. It is certain, however, that they were not published until the 18th Fructidor (see the 'Moniteur' of the 23rd of that month). I only heard of these documents on the occasion of my journey to Milan, through the conversations of which I give a summary. But it is evident that Buonaparte had alluded to them in the interview which took place in Prairial between himself, M. de Melzi and me, and this may be an explanation of certain things which he said on that occasion.

at Milan. One division, brought by Bernadotte from Germany to Italy, and which was distinguished by more polished manners and by the denomination of *Messieurs*, at that time considered to be an aristocratic form, had become a subject of sharp jesting, often degenerating into serious quarrels between the officers and men of the two armies. Buonaparte encouraged these dissensions by constant sarcasms pointed at Bernadotte and Moreau. In fact, he flattered himself that the party to which he should secure the victory would remain entirely dependent upon him, and that he should govern in its name. He was mistaken in this, and he soon discovered that to have bestowed power is not a reason for being admitted to share it. His Minister, Talleyrand, was also obliged to acknowledge the truth of this maxim after the Restoration.

To resume. Buonaparte had no sooner made up his mind, from the motives I have just enumerated, to back the Revolutionary party in the Directory, than he began to act on his decision with all the vigour and activity of his impetuous character. Availing himself as a pretext of the anniversary of the 14th of July, 1789, he organised a military fête at Milan on the 1st Thermidor (July 19). Five divisions of the army were brought together to solemnize the occasion, and each of them published addresses vying with the other in threats and

insults directed against the Government of the Republic, and the Monarchical faction. The divisions commanded by Angereau and by Masséna were especially remarkable for the violence of their language. "Are there more obstacles on the road to Paris than on that to Vienna?"* "Tremble! from the Adige to the Rhine and to the Seine there is but a step."† Such was the text more or less enlarged on in these diatribes. The toasts at the banquet were all conceived in the same spirit, and announced similar intentions. The address of Bernadotte's division only is in less highly coloured language, and is, indeed, remarkable for moderation,‡ a circumstance which did not tend to restore harmony between that division, which had been only lately incorporated with the army of Italy, and its original regiments.

After this demonstration, which left no doubt of Buonaparte's intentions and created a profound impression in Paris, he had no longer any appearances to keep up; moreover, it was not in his nature to shrink from consequences, whatever they might be, when once he had made up his mind to a course of action. He therefore kept a body of troops in

* Address of Masséna's division ('Moniteur' of the 26th Thermidor, year V.).

† Address of Angereau's division (Ibid.).

‡ See 'Moniteur' of same date.

readiness to enter France, if that which Hoche was already leading on Paris should not be sufficient, and he had already sent forward Angereau to command it. Angereau was a brave and daring leader, but impulsive, and without any intellectual capacity. He had also sent Bernadotte to Paris, the bearer of twenty-one flags taken at the battle of Rivoli, and in a letter to the Directory announcing their despatch he had highly praised that General. But his chief object was to get rid of a man with whom he was already not on good terms, and whose influence he wanted to weaken.

He was now master of the field, at the head of a triumphant and devoted army, whose patriotism and unreasoning love of liberty he had just roused to an enthusiastio pitch; he reckoned on unfailing success, and even flattered himself that he might at once make use of it to further the designs he had formed, and which he realised two years later. He appeared to me to reckon especially on the effect which the publication of the papers found in D'Entraigues' portfolio would produce; this led me to presume that he had not laid them before the Directory until after he had resolved on supporting the Revolutionary party. As he had still, however, to wait, before his departure for Udine, for some letters from Paris, which did not arrive until two or three days later, he profited by the kind of

inaction which always supervenes between great resolutions and their execution, to make an excursion to Lake Maggiore; and he invited me to accompany him. My desire to see that celebrated lake, and at the same time to prolong my stay with so extraordinary a man, whom I should have an opportunity of knowing and appreciating better in the course of this little excursion, made me accept so agreeable a proposal with readiness.

We left Milan on the 1st Fructidor (August 18). I had a place in Buonaparte's carriage with his wife and Berthier. During the drive, he was gay and animated, told us several anecdotes of his youth, and said that he had just completed his twenty-ninth year. He was extremely attentive to his wife, frequently taking little conjugal liberties that rather embarrassed Berthier and me; but his free and easy manners were so full of affection and tenderness towards a woman as lovable as she was good, that they might easily be excused. Although the conversation occasionally turned on grave matters, he did not betray the subject that was engrossing his thoughts. He avoided talking politics before Berthier, whom he valued only for his usefulness as chief of the staff, the duties of which post he fulfilled with marvellous activity—no one could surpass him in that quality.

In speaking of Talleyrand, Buonaparte took occa-

sion to praise him, his humour, and his ability, and in this the General's wife agreed. The conversation turned also on other personages who might play a part in public affairs in Paris, and among these, I named Rœderer, dwelling on his penetration, his ability as a writer and his extensive knowledge. Buonaparte, however, expressed an extreme aversion to him. He severely censured his conduct toward Louis XVI. and the Royal Family on the 10th of August, declaring that it combined both treason and duplicity, and adding that he could never feel confidence in a man who had laid himself open to such a reproach. I did my best to defend him, but Madame Buonaparte did not support me; she, like Berthier, kept silence. The sequel has shown that Rœderer succeeded in overcoming Buonaparte's aversion; probably his services on the 18th Brumaire blotted out the recollection of the 10th of August.

After a journey which the heat of the season made rather fatiguing, although we did most of our travelling during the night, we arrived at the shore of Lake Maggiore, and took up our abode at the magnificent palace erected in the centre of Isola Bella, the most beautiful of the islands which rise from the bosom of the lake. I will not enter here into a description of these lovely scenes. Art is unfortunately sometimes too conspicuous in them; but

the charms which they owe to Nature solely made an uneffaceable impression on my mind. The snow-capped summits of St. Gothard and the Simplon reflected in the clear and tranquil waters of the lake; the Ticino rushing in torrents from the mountain heights, and mingling its waters with those of that vast reservoir, whence it afterwards escapes to fertilise the plains of Lombardy by countless streams; the smiling hill-sides dotted with dwellings which bound the lake on the north, and the rich harvest covering the plains bathed by its waters on the south, all contributed at this period of the year to render the panorama which passed before our eyes more splendid than at any other season, and at the same time more enchanting on account of its perfect tranquillity. We enjoyed the delicious calm; it contrasted with the terrible scenes of war so close to us, and calmed the agitation into which the presentiment of an uncertain Future had thrown us.

Those two days at *Isola Bella* were most agreeable. Walking, bathing, and the pleasures of the table filled up our every moment, and it was with regret that we quitted the delightful scene to return to Milan. There we would have to re-enter the vortex from which it had been delightful to me to escape, though for so brief an interval.

After our return from the *Borromeo* Islands, I remained only a few days at Milan. Buonaparte at

last started for Udine, and I set out in order to resume the duties of my post at Turin. Before we parted, we had settled upon the line of conduct which I was to pursue in the critical circumstances which impending events in Paris would probably bring about. The following was the plan adopted :

1. Not only was I to take no part in any political troubles which might break out in Piedmont, but to tender an assurance that our troops should even be employed to disperse any gatherings of people which might take place on the territory of the Cisalpine Republics or of Genoa, the centres of insurrection in the States of the King of Sardinia.

2. I was to demand of the Sardinian Government that, in order to carry out the treaty of alliance, the ten thousand men to be supplied by Piedmont be again assembled at Novara in readiness to march, if fresh hostilities with Austria should break out.

3. At the same time that I should require this movement of the troops, in order to support the negotiations in progress at Udine, I was to press for the ratification of the treaty of alliance by the Legislative Council in Paris, as the best guarantee to the Cabinet of Turin of the real intentions of the Executive Directory.

4. I was to insist, however, since quiet had been restored in Piedmont, on the cessation of severe measures which were keeping up a feeling of irri-

tation injurious to the real interests of the King of Sardinia.

Furnished with these instructions, on the 7th Fructidor I reached Turin (August 22), where I had left M. Jacob as *Chargé d’Affaires*. His correspondence with the Sardinian Government during my absence had been principally on the subject of an unfriendly discussion which had arisen between the Minister and me respecting the steps I had taken to put an end to the excessive severity of the Cabinet of Turin towards those persons who had taken part in the last insurrection. M. de Prioca had complained bitterly at Paris of my conduct in this respect, and I was not unaware of the fact. In an interview with him a few days after my return, during which I again insisted on the necessity of more moderate measures, advancing General Buonaparte’s opinion in support of my demands, M. de Prioca replied that the French Government took no interest in the fate of the condemned, and had, on the contrary, highly approved of the conduct of the Piedmontese Ministry; and in truth, M. de Talleyrand, as I have said before, had disapproved of my interference, without, however, owning that he had used the words attributed to him by M. de Balbi, and which M. de Prioca had repeated to me. It was plain, from these facts, that the Cabinet of Turin, in the constant persuasion that a coming

crisis would restore a Monarchical Government in France, with which it would be better able to agree, was using its influence at Paris to get me recalled. I do not know whether in so doing it acted wisely ; it is certain that my successors consummated the ruin of the Monarchy ; and that I, on the contrary, so far as it lay in my power, had contributed to its preservation. Nevertheless, I endeavoured with no less zeal to obtain the ratification of the treaty, to which the Sardinian Government attached great importance at that time. But nothing decisive was done, and the daily expectation of a crisis, which it was thought must occur, kept all business in suspense.

The catastrophe was not long delayed. The 18th Fructidor brought about the ruin of the Royalist party, but the Constitution of the year III. fell with it. That day dealt it a blow from which it never entirely recovered ; the 18th Brumaire completed the work, and on both the one and the other occasion Buonaparte was the agent of its destruction. It had not been in existence two years when it received this first great check. Afterwards it declined away, and until its final overthrow was a Revolutionary rather than a regular Government.

A few days after the 18th Fructidor, I received a letter from M. de Talleyrand, probably a copy of a circular letter addressed to all the diplomatic agents, containing a complete *Apologia* of that day. I com-

municated this document to the Sardinian Government, which, being forced to renounce the imperious attitude it had hitherto taken and more alarmed than ever for its own existence, now openly threatened by the triumph of the democratic party in France, showed itself better disposed and amenable than before. Fresh requests were made to me to obtain the ratification of the treaty of alliance; but the shape that Buonaparte was giving to the peace-negotiations at Udine made the aid that had been asked of Piedmont less necessary, and the expectation of this always-deferred ratification prolonged the suspense of the Turin Cabinet from day to day. At last the ardently-desired instrument arrived. Although M. de Talleyrand had written to me on the 14th Vendémiaire, year IV. (October 5, 1797), that circumstances would no longer permit us to contemplate this alliance, the Directory, probably urged by Buonaparte, suddenly changed front, and two or three days afterwards sent the treaty to the two Councils for ratification. But the alliance was effected too late to save Piedmont; moreover, Royalty was about to lose its only support in Italy. Buonaparte was to remain there no longer, and his influence on the fate of Italy was on the point of ceasing. In order to make these matters plain, I must go back a little.

I have sufficiently explained Buonaparte's motives

for supporting the democratic party in the Directory, and his adhesion secured its triumph on the 18th Fructidor. It was sufficiently clear that the principles professed by this party were not those which the General wished to defend, and that he had in no wise adopted them; but he was obliged to choose between two parties, of which one, had it carried the day, would necessarily have brought back the Bourbons and ruined for ever his ulterior designs, so he decided in favour of that party which some day he might more easily overthrow, and on whose ruins he might establish his own power. Perhaps he even believed the catastrophe to be then at hand, and it was only on examining the situation more closely that he was convinced the moment had not yet arrived. In any case, it was needful that Peace should be the first gift of the new Government that owed its birth to the 18th Fructidor, in order to compensate for the alarm which that day had caused every sincere friend of liberty. The Directory felt this, and no longer opposed any measure which might bring about that result. On the other hand, Buonaparte, observing the eagerness of the Directory, justly feared that the matter might be concluded without him; and this would indeed have been easily done, either by carrying the negotiations on in France, or by entrusting them to Angereau, who had just been appointed Commander-in-Chief of the

army in Germany. Finally, he would cede to no other the credit of making peace, for he intended to assume that France and the Directory itself were beholden to him for it. He therefore hastened on the end. The negotiations, which had dragged along for more than six months, were now carried on with despatch, and peace was concluded at Campo-Formio (near Udine) on the 26th Vendémiaire, year IV. (October 17, 1797), one month and twelve days after the 18th Fructidor. The treaty is signed by Buonaparte alone, in the name of the French Government. Clarke was not admitted to the honour of signing, although he had gone to Udine as one of the Plenipotentiaries. Buonaparte suffered no other name beside his, that the gratitude on which he relied might not be divided.

But this gratitude weighed especially on the Directory, which soon showed how heavy a burden it was. Buonaparte had sent Berthier and Monge to the Directory as bearers of the treaty of Campo-Formio. They reached Paris on the 4th Brumaire (October 25). The Directory ratified the treaty on the 5th, and on the same day appointed Buonaparte Commander-in-Chief of an army which was to be assembled on the coast, and to which was given the pompous name of the Army of England.

By this appointment Buonaparte was snatched

from the scenes of his conquests, and separated from the army he had so often led to victory, and which was entirely devoted to him. The ties which had been formed between the illustrious Captain and his soldiers were broken, and the Directory hoped to escape from all the attempts upon which an ambitious mind, relying on so many glorious deeds and on the devotion of the troops, might venture against a power still dazzled by an unexpected elevation, a power, nevertheless, supported neither by public opinion nor by renown, and which the least shock might overthrow.

Although the appointment of Buonaparte to the command of the new army was accompanied by the most flattering expressions of esteem, and the Directory added a striking mark of confidence by entrusting the political conduct of the negotiations about to be opened at Rastadt for treating for peace with the German Empire,* to the Conqueror and Peacemaker, Buonaparte could not mistake the real meaning of the Directory. From that moment he formed a resolution to remain in France only if he could in one way or another place himself at the head of affairs, but if he should find that the times were not yet ripe to afford him the position he aimed at, as the only one suited to his genius, to absent

* This Congress was to take place in virtue of one of the articles of the treaty of Campo-Formio.

himself on some extraordinary expedition which would add to his fame.

The news of the recall of General Buonaparte, and the absolute silence of the Campo-Formio Treaty as to Piedmont, threw the Turin Cabinet into the greatest ferment. It addressed itself once more to me, but I could serve it but little. I foresaw already that immediately on Buonaparte's departure from Italy the Revolutionary party would again get the upper hand; that I should be by no means favourably regarded by that party, which, as M. Botta wrote,* looked upon me as a lukewarm republican, and that it would very soon be powerful enough to remove me. I could therefore neither sway the action of the Directory, nor tranquillise the uneasiness of the Court of Turin on this subject. M. de Talleyrand, moreover, instructed me to avoid entering on any explanation respecting the consequences of the treaty with Austria; so that the reserve that I was compelled to adopt increased the alarm of the Government, which perceived that it was in more danger than ever at the very time when it had reckoned on a greater security. My relations with it dwindled day by day, until our interviews were restricted to discussions relating to the execution of the secret convention annexed to the treaty of alliance of the 20th Germinal, year V.,

* In his '*Histoire des Guerres d'Italie.*'

by which the island of Sardinia was ceded to us; discussions which resulted in nothing, and to a rather troublesome correspondence on the *émigrés* in Nice and Savoy, to whom the Directory, which had become more suspicious, now wanted to forbid asylum there. It was at this time that, having been again questioned respecting the residence of the Comtesse d'Artois at Turin, I succeeded in procuring the exemption of that Princess from the laws against emigration, which were then being rigorously enforced.

Such was the state of affairs in Piedmont, and such were the causes that had brought it about, when Berthier, after he had presented the treaty of Campo-Formio at a solemn audience on the 10th Brumaire, year VI. (October 31, 1797),* returned to Milan and took command of the army of Italy, which Buonaparte, who was preparing for departure, had handed over to him.† Joseph Buonaparte

* See the 'Moniteur' of 12th Brumaire, for the details of this ceremony and the curious speeches delivered by Berthier and Monge.

† Bernadotte, who had returned to Milan about a month previously, and had resumed the command of his division, expected to succeed Buonaparte, but, probably because the Directory had already formed the hostile views with regard to Italy, which were afterwards made manifest, and which Bernadotte would not perhaps have zealously seconded, he was appointed to the Embassy of Vienna, and left Milan for Paris towards the middle of Brumaire. I saw him on his

had already parted with his brother and gone, as ambassador, to Rome. He was accompanied by his wife, his youngest brother, Jerome Buonaparte, and his sister Caroline.

Buonaparte left Milan on the 26th Brumaire, and arrived at Turin on the morning of the 28th. His wife had preceded him by a few days, on her way to Paris. She dined at my house, and brought with her a casket containing some valuable trinkets, from which she could not bear to be separated for a moment.

Buonaparte had sent me word that he would be at Turin on the morning of the 27th Brumaire; but he did not leave Milan until the night of the 26th, too late to keep his promise. I waited for him in vain until midnight and then withdrew.

I was aroused at half-past two in the morning of the 28th. Buonaparte had just arrived, and while the dinner that had been prepared for the preceding evening was being got ready, I remained for an hour by the fireside alone with the General. From notes I made at the time, I will now give an exact account of our interview.

He took up the conversation almost where he had

way through Turin, when he informed me of his appointment, which was not as yet officially known. He did not proceed to Vienna until the beginning of Ventôse, year VI. (end of February 1798).

dropped it on the occasion of our last interviews at Milan. He defended the resolution he had taken to support the 18th Fructidor, by arguments which I have already recorded. "But do not imagine," continued he, "that I resolved on so doing because of any conformity of ideas with those of the men whom I supported. I did not choose that the Bourbons should return, especially if brought back by Moreau's army and by Pichegru. The papers found in d'Entraigues' portfolio had sufficiently enlightened me as to the projects of those two Generals. I do not care to play the part of Monk; I will not play it myself, and I do not choose that others shall do so. But those Paris lawyers who have got into the Directory* understand nothing of government. They are poor creatures. I am going to see what they want to do at Rastadt; but I doubt much that we shall understand each other, or long agree together. They are jealous of me, I know, and notwithstanding all their flattery, I am not their dupe; they fear more than they love me. They were in a great hurry to make me General of the army of England, so that they might get me out of Italy, where I am the master; and am more of a sovereign than commander of an army. They will see how things go on when I am not there. I am

* Merlin (of Douai) and François de Neufchâteau, who had been elected in place of Barthélemy and Carnot.

leaving Berthier, but he is not fit for the chief command, and, I predict, will only make blunders. As for myself, my dear Miot, I may inform you, I can no longer obey ; I have tasted command, and I cannot give it up. I have made up my mind, if I cannot be master I shall leave France ; I do not choose to have done so much for her and then hand her over to lawyers. As for this country " (speaking of Piedmont), "it will not be at rest for long. I have done all in my power to secure the tranquillity of the King, but the Directory is surrounded by a set of patriots and idealists who understand nothing of politics. They will set Italy in flames, and get us driven out some day."

"In that case," I replied, "I do not think they will leave me here. I am far from sharing their exaggerated ideas. I have got on well with you, but I do not think I could get on with others. Will you ask for an appointment in Germany for me ?"

Buonaparte promised that he would do so. I spoke to him next of the Court of Turin. "I will not go to it," he answered ; "I want no fêtes, no attentions. I do not choose to deceive, and my presence at Court or an interview with the King would raise hopes which I could not realise ; he would believe himself to be secure if I accepted distinctions and favours from him ; and he would find out his mistake."

Accordingly, during the thirteen hours that he passed at Turin he did not leave my house. When our conversation was over, we sat down to table. It was then four in the morning.

Day had hardly dawned when a crowd, attracted by curiosity and the desire of seeing so famous a General, assembled before my house. The King sent one of his principal officers with compliments on the part of his Majesty. Buonaparte afterwards received the Ministers, and welcomed M. de Saint-Marsan with special fervour. He also received the generals and superior officers who were in Turin, as well as some private individuals who tried to induce him to favour a revolution in Piedmont. But he gave no heed to these suggestions. In the course of the morning the King sent him a very fine Sardinian horse. The Queen * had hung on the animal's neck a necklace of precious stones, the last of her jewels; she had sacrificed all the others to the needs of the State. Buonaparte could not venture to refuse either the horse or the necklace, but he seemed moved by this pathetic gift and the circumstances under which it was offered. To the King's officers who had brought it he presented snuff-boxes set in diamonds, and valuable rings, and made presents to the royal household greatly exceeding in value those which he had accepted.

* Madame Clotilde of France, sister to Louis XVI.

He drove away in his carriage at four in the afternoon, crossed Mont Cenis the next day, and passing through Switzerland arrived at Bâle on the 5th Frimaire (Nov. 25). He proceeded thence to Rastadt, where he remained only a short time, and finally reached Paris on the 16th Frimaire (December 6).

At the time of Buonaparte's departure the Cabinet of Turin, becoming more and more uneasy, had caused some suggestions to be made to him by M. de Saint-Marsan, to the effect that Sardinia should be represented at the Congress of Rastadt; but they were evaded. I, however, consented to grant an ordinary traveller's passport for Germany to the Cavaliere Napioni, by means of which he proceeded to Rastadt. The Court of Turin, coldly treated by France, was trying, at that time to ally itself with Austria, which just then was re-entering Italy by the cession of Venice, as stipulated in the treaty of peace at Campo-Formio. But all these endeavours, all these expedients of a constrained policy, were destined to failure, from the force of circumstances, and the new departure which affairs had taken in France since the 18th Fructidor. In virtue of the first treaty of the 26th Floreal, year IV. (May 15, 1796) we held several fortified places in Piedmont; *

* Coni, Ceva, Tortona, Exilles, la Brunette, Alexandria, &c. See Article 12 of treaty ('Moniteur' of 4th Prairial, year IV.).

and so long as Buonaparte remained at the head of the army of Italy, the commandants of the French troops in these places exercised military authority only. But hardly had he crossed the Alps, than those commandants began to assume a political attitude, assisted instead of restraining the enterprises of agitators, and promulgated orders for the expulsion of *émigrés* from Nice and Savoy, before the question of right of asylum had been decided between the French and Sardinian Governments. General Casabianca, renowned for his military feats, and especially for the defence of Calvi in 1794, but in other respects a passionate and reckless man, particularly distinguished himself by every kind of violence. I sent complaints of his conduct to Paris, but was not listened to.

Casabianca kept up a correspondence with Barras, in which I was not spared by a man who had much to do with the overthrow of the throne of the kings of Sardinia. It would, however, be giving him too much credit to suppose that he acted thus either through conviction or from principle; he was merely an instrument in the hands of the secret agents employed by the Directory in Italy.

CHAPTER VII.

The Author is recalled from the Embassy at Turin, and is succeeded by Ginguéné—Joseph Buonaparte, having left Rome after the assassination of General Duphot, stays with the Author at Turin, on his way to Paris—Berthier marches on Rome, overthrows the Pope's Government and proclaims the Roman Republic—Monge and Dannou, being sent by the Directory to organise the new Republic, pass through Turin—The hostile dispositions of the Directory towards the King of Sardinia are more and more openly displayed—Ginguéné, accompanied by Garat, arrives at Turin on his way to Naples as Ambassador there—The Author presents his letters of recall to the King of Sardinia, and takes advantage of his leisure to make an excursion in the Alps—On returning, he leaves for Paris—Sketch of the state of Italy at the beginning of 1798, and of the events that took place after the departure of the Author.

TOWARDS the end of 1797, when the storm that hung over Piedmont was gathering volume from every quarter, I learned from a letter written by the Minister of Exterior Relations, on the 5th Nivôse, year XI. (December 25, 1797), that the Directory had thought proper to recall me, and to appoint M. Ginguéné as my successor. As, however, this letter

did not assign any motive for my recall, I remained officially ignorant of the reasons for that step, but I have said enough to make them intelligible to the reader. From the moment that I was apprised of my recall, I began to long ardently for the arrival of my successor. The Sardinian Government, which was probably informed that I had been recalled before I knew the fact, considered itself dispensed from any consideration for me. The disturbances which were breaking out in every direction, and by which the safety of the French soldiers who passed through Piedmont was frequently endangered, gave rise to a disagreeable and fruitless correspondence. I received no directions from my Government, and I was ignorant of the instructions that had been given to my successor. The latter unfortunately had resolved on converting a diplomatic journey into one of self-improvement, and after having taken two months to make up his mind to leave Paris, he turned his steps towards Switzerland, and did not arrive in Turin until more than three months after his nomination.

Those three months of suspense were very painful to me, for I found myself deprived of all moral influence, and I had become, as it were, a stranger to our diplomacy, which the Directory had almost entirely remodelled since the 18th Fructidor.*

* Guillemandet was appointed, at this period, ambassador to Spain, Garat to Naples, Sotin to Genoa, Ginguéné to Turin, and

Evidently the project of revolutionising Italy was beginning to preponderate. Every man who was appointed in Paris, and among them I hasten to acknowledge that there were men of real merit and incorruptible honesty, such as Garat and Ginguéné, owed his promotion more or less to the dogmatic and proselytising spirit which was for a while triumphant, but which, lacking the support of either military success or civic worth, raised up for us implacable enemies in Italy, and ultimately drove us out of that country.

In this state of things, I was endeavouring still to hold my position with dignity, when, on the 25th Nivôse (January 14, 1798), Joseph Buonaparte and his family arrived unexpectedly. He had left Rome abruptly, after the events which took place there on the 6th of the same month (December 26), and resulted in the assassination of General Duphot. Rumours of these events had already reached us, but I knew none of the details. Joseph passed one day at my house in Turin and then immediately resumed his journey to Paris. From the particulars which he gave me, I foresaw that the legitimate pretext for seizing upon Rome

Trouvé to the Cisalpine Republic at Milan. Everything in our Exterior Relations was assuming a new complexion, and the whole system established by Buonaparte in Italy was overturned by these appointments.

which such excesses would furnish to the Directory, would be eagerly embraced, and that a Revolution which would shortly spread all over Italy must ensue. We congratulated each other on our not being obliged to witness that revolution, and we agreed to meet in Paris, where I hoped he would precede me by a few days only. I have already said that the delay in the arrival of Ginguéné detained me at Turin much longer than I then expected.

Only a short time elapsed ere the consequences of the events at Rome became manifest. Berthier, whom Buonaparte had left at Milan, received orders towards the end of Nivôse to march on Rome. He arrived there on the 27th Pluviôse (February 13), drove out the Pope, proclaimed the restoration of the Roman Republic, made a ridiculous speech at the Capitol, and despatched to Paris as a trophy—the Pope's walking-stick! But he did not make a long stay at Rome. Buonaparte, who was then planning the expedition to Egypt, recalled him to Paris, and he was succeeded in the command of the army of Rome by Masséna, who was appointed on 6th Ventôse (February 24). General Brune had already succeeded Berthier in the command of the army of Italy—its headquarters were still at Milan.

Before receiving information that the French troops had reached Rome, the Executive Directory which, reasonably enough, entertained no doubt of

the success of that expedition, had hastened to appoint Commissioners to organise the future Republic. Monge and Dannou were chosen for the task, both men of great worth, but more given to political theories than distinguished for knowledge of the world, and consequently little fitted for the management of men. I saw them at the end of Pluviôse (towards the middle of February) on their way through Turin, when they paid me a visit, accompanied by M. de St. Martin, who was formerly almoner to the Paris National Guard, and at present Secretary to the Commission. The visit was a purely formal one. They said very little of the object of their mission, sought for no information from me upon the present state of Italy, and would not even accept the dinner to which I invited them. They were going to make a revolution, to restore the former Roman Republic, and those things were miracles in which I did not believe. They discovered afterwards which of us had judged rightly. I was sooner undeceived than they, and had over them the melancholy advantage of foreseeing that, with the instruments of which we were obliged to make use, with generals and agents equally corrupt and greedy of gain, it was perfectly visionary to attempt the regeneration of an ignorant and fanatical populace.

But I must do both Monge and Dannou the

justice to say that they were actuated by the purest motives and uninfluenced by any desire of personal gain. Dannou's high-mindedness never varied for a single instant; and if Monge, his colleague, displayed less firmness of principle, the immense services he has rendered to science, and especially to its diffusion, will cause some little weakness of character to be forgotten, and posterity, remembering his merits only, will hold his name in undying honour.

While Monge and Dannou, full of hopes that were not to be realised, were hastening towards Rome, the Cabinet of Turin, aware of their mission, of the Directory's projects against the authority of the Pope, and of the revolution which was brewing in the centre of Italy, was much cast down, and now dreaded the arrival of Ginguéné as much as it had recently desired my recall. Meanwhile, it sought to avert the undeniably imminent danger, by renewing the negotiations for the accomplishment of the convention annexed to the treaty of alliance of 26th Germinal, year V., and M. de Balbi had presented on 16th Ventôse, year VI. (March 6, 1798), the outline of a treaty for the exchange of the island of Sardinia, against the States of the Infant of Parma, annexing to it the title of King. But the coldness with which this proposition was received, served only to confirm the fears with which the hostile attitude of the

- Executive Power inspired the Sardinian Government. For my own part, as all my efforts on behalf of this proposition, and also those which I made to obtain an exact explanation with respect to Piedmont, were equally fruitless, I was convinced that the final intention of the Directory was to abandon that unhappy country to its fate; and so I left off all political correspondence, deeming it henceforth superfluous, and confined myself to the formal business of the embassy. I observed this attitude of reserve while expecting from day to day the arrival of my successor, who was to bring with him fresh instructions, and probably the sentence of the Directory upon Sardinia.

Ginguéné arrived at Turin on the 3rd Germinal, year VI. (March 23, 1798). He had travelled with Garat, who was going as ambassador to Naples. They were both very clever men, but in proportion as I took pleasure in conversing with them on literary and philosophical subjects, I was surprised at their diplomatic language, and their strange ideas of the functions which they were about to fulfil. They were quite in the clouds; they were preceptors of kings, and not ambassadors. As they had never had any experience of the difficulties which the habits and prejudices of peoples oppose to innovators, they seemed to be unaware that time only wears out errors, that they must be sapped at

their bases by the patient spread of instruction in the lower classes of society, and that to attack prejudices in the front is to give them new strength. Not such were the means which these gentlemen proposed to employ. They were resolved to respect neither public nor private manners or customs, to conform to no usages, and, above all, to withstand the etiquette of courts. They intended to be as inflexible in outward forms as in principles, and brought philosophical intolerance to the overthrow of religious intolerance. I soon perceived that I could not attain to their height, and that they pitied my simplicity and the timid course I had observed.

At our first meeting, Ginguéné assured me that his wife, the French ambassadress,* would never submit to the ridiculous costume of the Turin Court, but would go to Court in a white gown, a bonnet, and white cotton stockings. I replied that I had thought it well to act in a contrary manner; that on principle I would never offend against established usage, especially in such trifles as the shape of a gown, or a head-dress; that my wife had conformed to the customs of the country, without incurring blame from any quarter whatsoever; but that

* This title is given by courtesy only. The wife of an ambassador is not an ambassadress. M. de Talleyrand, in his correspondence, ridiculed Ginguéné, for giving the title of ambassadress to his wife.

probably he had very good reasons for not imitating my conduct. He next asked me if I had made any speech to the King on presenting my letters of credit. I replied that I had not, and that having been received, as he himself would be, at a private audience, nothing would have seemed to me more inappropriate than to deliver a speech, either from writing, or from memory, to a man with whom I was tête-à-tête, so that there could be no one present to testify to what I had said. He answered that he should nevertheless make his speech, and that, moreover, he should have it published. I returned, that undoubtedly he must have reasons for acting thus, and that no doubt they were excellent ones. Garat, who was present at our conversation, strongly approved the intentions of Ginguéné, which I indeed in no wise controverted. Nor had we any other discussion, and I feel bound to say that, with the exception of these little differences of opinion, there was a similarity in our principles conducive to mutual esteem.

Ginguéné brought me my letters of recall. On 5th Germinal (March 25) I presented them to the King, who was good enough to express some regret at losing me; and if he already felt a presentiment of the misfortunes which soon were to overwhelm him, I must believe his regret to have been sincere. Ginguéné had an audience on the 11th of the same

month, made his speech, and took the direction of affairs, which I gladly handed over to him.

Free, as I now was, from all official cares, I wished before returning to my own country, from which I had been absent more than three years, to profit by a few weeks of pleasant leisure to make an excursion in the Alps.

I left Turin on 15th Germinal (April 4), and passed the night at the house of the Count de Brusasco, with whom I had become intimate during my residence in Piedmont, and who resided on the pretty estate of the same name ; at a short distance from Crescentino on the banks of the Po. I spent two very pleasant days there, in the company of my host, a man of remarkable talents and a good musician. From thence, I resumed my journey, in company with the venerable Molineri, an excellent botanist,* one of the fellow-workers of the famous Allioni, in the classification of the Flora of Piedmont. Notwithstanding his age, he consented to accompany me on my excursion, and his knowledge of natural history, and his familiarity with the mountains I was about to visit, and which he had already explored several times, were of infinite service to me.

We went first up the valley of the Doira-

* He was attached as head gardener to the Valentino Botanical Gardens, near Turin.

Baltea,* from Ivrea to Aosta,† where we arrived on the 19th Germinal (April 8), and although it was very early in the season, my companion remarked and pointed out to me a number of rare plants, which we gathered. The road passing through the valley was at that time a fine one, well kept, and offering a delightful variety of view. At Aosta we hired mules, to take us to Cormayeur, a large district situated at the foot of the eastern and southern slopes of Mont Blanc, and celebrated for its mineral springs. We continued to ascend the valley of the Doira, passing through Villeneuve d'Aosta, Avisa, Lasalle and Storges.

Cormayeur, according to the calculation of M. de Saussure, is 625 fathoms above the level of the Mediterranean, that is to say, about a quarter of the height of Mont Blanc. I took up my quarters there for four days, and employed my time in making excursions in the neighbourhood. J. L. Jordany, called "Patience," an inhabitant of Cormayeur, accompanied me—he had also served as guide to M. de Saussure during his expeditions in these parts of the Alps. Under his guidance we explored the valley

* In Piedmont the name of *Doira* is given to all streams descending from the Col de la Seigne and the Col de Ferret, where the watershed of the Adriatic commences.

† This village is known in the country under the name of the Capital of the Crétins (or idiots), from the great number of these unfortunate beings among its inhabitants.

of Cormayeur, the Allée Blanche, the Valley of Ferret and the Breuva Glacier, one of the finest in the Alps. This glacier is reached by crossing a beautiful forest of larches, which bounds it on the lower side. After passing the moraine,* which is very lofty, we climbed to a considerable height, crossing, with the help of our guide, the numerous and profound crevasses that intersect it. Mont Blanc towered above our heads to the north, but the aiguilles, especially the Giant, at whose foot we were, hid its summit from our sight. Our curiosity not being completely satisfied, we resolved on climbing, as a last expedition, a mountain, to which our guide gave the name of Chicouri, situated on the north-west of Cormayeur, and from whose summit Mont Blanc and its aiguilles are all visible. We started on the 24th Germinal, an hour before dawn, and by steep pathways, every turn of which was known to our guide, we succeeded in reaching the summit of the mountain. The sun, which had just risen, cast a bright radiance on the magnificent landscape that surrounded us. The rose-coloured summit of Mont Blanc was scarcely distinguishable among the nearest aiguilles.

Across the valley of Cormayeur and the Allée Blanche, we saw the Breuva and Miège glaciers

* A *moraine* is a heap of stones which generally forms the exterior boundary of a glacier.

reflecting back the sunlight in a thousand glittering peaks. Never had I beheld so grand a spectacle.

Our guide had arranged our day's journey so that we should return to Cormayeur by the opposite slope of Chicouri from that which we had taken in ascending, and reach the extreme end of the Allée Blanche and the valley that terminates it. We were preparing to commence the descent, when the wind, rising from the depths of the valley and heaping up the clouds, hid all the landscape beneath us by degrees, while the sky overhead remained blue and serene. But the clouds continuing to rise, surrounded us on all sides, and bore with them the storm they carried in their bosom. In one instant the ground on which we were walking was covered with snow as fine, powdery, and penetrating as dust. Our footmarks on the former snows were effaced, and a north-east wind, which took away our breath, began to blow with violence, causing us intolerable discomfort. At last all unevenness in the ground disappeared, and we could no longer distinguish any of the landmarks. In spite of his great experience, our guide seemed anxious. He at once abandoned his intention of taking us back by the northern slope of the mountain, and set about returning by the same way we had come. His thorough acquaintance with the mountains and a kind of instinct guided him in the right direction,

and we were advancing with confidence, when all of a sudden he disappeared in a chasm that had been filled up by snow, but was not sufficiently firm to bear the weight of a man. We ran to his assistance, and succeeded with some trouble in dragging him out of the crevasse, which happily was not deep.* We set off again, using our alpenstocks for the steepest descents. At last the storm, after having lasted more than two hours, died away; imperceptibly the rocky points, the mountain-tops, the summits of the trees in the valley reappeared, and, without incurring fresh dangers, we accomplished the rest of the distance to Cormayeur.

The time at my disposal did not permit me to renew the attempt that had just failed. I left Cormayeur the next day, the 25th Germinal (April 14), to return to Aosta. There I took a day's rest, and started on the 27th for the Great St. Bernard.

On leaving Aosta the traveller still sees vines and cultivated fields; but, in proportion as he ascends, the temperature becomes colder. We were very glad to reach St. Remy,† where we found

* Our little party was composed of five persons; Molineri, Patience the guide, a porter loaded with provisions, a servant, and myself.

† St. Remy, situated at 1604 yards above the level of the sea, is the last village of Piedmont; but the territorial limit of the States of the King of Sardinia and of the Republic of Valais, is higher up on the mountain.

an excellent inn and well supplied-stoves. We hired guides for the ascent of Mount St. Bernard by the path which leads to the monastery.* The time of year was not favourable for this ascent; the snow had disappeared in the valley, but that which during the winter had been heaped up on the steep mountain-sides now threatened to descend in avalanches. It is at this season that avalanches occur most frequently, and the route is consequently dangerous. Nevertheless, the fear of so formidable an accident did not deter us, but, following the advice of our guides, we left the mules at St. Remy and performed the journey on foot. The guides advised us to maintain perfect silence, and we followed the narrow mountain-path in single file. The distance from St. Remy to the monastery of the Great St. Bernard is about six or seven miles, and we accomplished it in three hours. At a mile and a quarter's distance from the last chalets on the road we began to distinguish the monastery buildings, and to the west of these and on our right we perceived the lake, which was still frozen over in many places. The landscape here is melancholy and impressive. Not a tree, not a trace of vegetation is seen on the rocks rising on every side, and whose black peaks detach

* The monastery of St. Bernard is situated on the verge of the perpetual snow-line; this line in the Alps is between 1300 and 1400 fathoms above the level of the sea.

themselves from the almost eternal snows that fill up the interval and which had not yet begun to melt. A small garden, lying to the south and sheltered by the monastery wall, is with difficulty made to yield a few vegetables during the summer. They are of indifferent quality.

Every kind of provision, even the wood for fuel, is carried to the hospice on the backs of mules from Valais and Piedmont.

I was extremely well received by the hospitable monks. In the room in which we dined, the barometer was a few lines above twelve inches, an observation which agrees pretty well with those that have been taken with greater exactitude in order to ascertain the height of the pass of the Great St. Bernard. According to the calculation of M. de Saussure, the convent is at a height of 1257 fathoms, and the pass at its highest points, according to the '*Annuaire du Bureau des Longitudes*,' is 2491 yards above the level of the sea.

I went over every part of the hospice, a wise and humane foundation, and I spent the night there. On the following morning, we returned in the same order and with the same precautions as before to the village of St. Remy. In the evening of the 23rd Germinal I was back at Aosta, well pleased to have so happily accomplished a journey whose difficulty and danger was even at that period

exaggerated. No one then could imagine that, four years later, the road which was considered barely practicable for mules would be traversed by a powerful army; that a large body of artillery would be transported along the narrow pathway hanging over a precipice, and that Italy's most formidable barrier would thus sink before the genius of the greatest captain of modern times, and the dauntless heroism of the French soldiery.

I purposed returning immediately to Turin; but I was prevailed upon by the Intendant of the Province of Aosta, who had received me with the greatest courtesy, and had given me every assistance towards the success of my expedition, to make a three days' excursion with him into the valley of Cognes, to visit the iron mines situated on a slope of Mount Iseran which closes in that valley.

Although less frequented by travellers than the other valleys of the Alps, Cognes is one of the most picturesque. We ascended towards its source the course of a torrent which descends from Mount Iseran and falls into the ~~Dora~~ near Aosta. The banks of this stream are wooded, and display rich and beautiful Alpine vegetation. At every step we beheld the rarest plants; my companion Molineri gathered the *Linnaea borealis*, the *Rhododendron ferrugineum*, the *Artemisia glacialis* and others—which my taste for botany made me regard as very precious.

We thus made our way along a road, made delightful by charming views and interesting conversation, to the village of Cognes, where we passed the night. Early on the following morning we proceeded to the iron-mines. These mines are worked in the open air, and consist of a group of rocks entirely composed of carbonate of iron, which is broken off in large blocks. These blocks are rolled down the mountain to the site upon which the factories are built over the torrent which waters the valley of Cognes. The entire mass of the mountain consists of the mineral itself, and is of such extent that if worked it would afford an enormous supply. But the great elevation of the site, which may be reckoned at more than a thousand fathoms above the level of the sea, and the impossibility of working it during the greater part of the year, considerably lessen its produce. From Cognes to the mines, the road is very steep and vegetation gradually dwindles away. A few dry plants and stunted birch-trees are still to be seen here and there, but at length even the *Arenaria biflora*, which Molineri considers as the last plant which flourishes on the heights of the Alps below the line of everlasting snow, disappears.

After this excursion we returned to Cognes, thence I made my way to Aosta; and immediately afterwards left for Turin, where I arrived on 2nd

Floréal (April 20). I remained there a few hours only, and set out at once for Paris.

I must not, however, take leave of Italy without giving some idea of the condition of that beautiful country at the time of my departure, and a sketch of the events which took place immediately afterwards. Although I no longer held an official position, the notes I had taken, a few confidential correspondences which outlived my public duties, the abiding interest I felt in a country to which I was so warmly attached, and, finally, the desire to justify my own conduct there, led me to amass an amount of information which enables me to throw some light on the causes of the disasters that so soon succeeded to our triumphs, and I will take the present opportunity of pointing them out.

I will begin with Piedmont. The first steps taken by Ginguéné had alarmed the Cabinet of Turin, and dealings with him had been difficult. An argument which, to say the least, was inexpedient, had arisen on the subject of Madame Ginguéné's presentation. She had, as I have already said, refused to wear the conventional Court dress, and yet insisted on being received at Court. Ginguéné, however, had prevailed; the presentation had taken place, and when I saw him on my way through Turin after my Alpine excursion, he was delighted with and proud of his triumph. But these feelings were greatly

qualified by the difficulties of his position. Disturbances were breaking out in all parts of Piedmont, and Brune, who for two months had had the command of the army of Italy, far from acting on Buonaparte's principles, seemed to have no intention of opposing any effectual resistance to those disturbances. The seat of the insurrection was at first at Carosio, a small province belonging to Piedmont, but enclosed within the territory of the new Ligurian Republic, which had just risen from the ruins of the ancient oligarchy of Genoa. The revolt was headed by a man named Trombetta, a Piedmontese by birth, but who wore the French uniform, and even described himself as an agent of the French Republic. Notwithstanding the protestations of the Cisalpine and Ligurian Directories, it was evident that neither one nor the other observed a strict neutrality, and that the spirit of proselytism, which made further progress every day, inclined both these Governments to encourage disturbances which must bring about the destruction of a monarchical State, whose existence in the midst of so many republics seemed to them a political paradox. M. de Balbi made serious complaints in Paris of the hostile feeling against Piedmont openly displayed both at Milan and Genoa, and he certainly was not wrong in regarding those two Governments as the greatest enemies of his country. But his complaints were unheeded.

The Directory of the French Republic, far from disapproving of the disturbances, was waiting impatiently for the results that must needs follow, and was preparing to profit by them.

Meanwhile the first attempts of the insurgents were repulsed by the troops which were sent against them by the Piedmontese Government. But after some few checks, they were renewed with greater force, and the insurgents contrived to establish and maintain a position in the village of Casosio, whence they traversed the Ligurian territory, which was free to them, but on which the King's troops might not follow them, and carried the signal of revolt to other points of Piedmont. At the same time gatherings of the people at Milan were causing alarm on the frontiers on the side of Lake Maggiore. These insurrectionary movements were fomented by outrageous libels on the King of Sardinia, and by proclamations which clearly conveyed that their authors were under the protection of France.

The following is a rather curious extract from one of the latter :

“ The French Government, in order to promote peace and the triumph of the Grand Army, has been forced for the time being to look upon kings as the representatives of their subjects. This supposition, though unlawful, was necessary for the opening of negotiations, but it is at the present time,

circumscribed and limited. To protect the weak, is it not a means of exhausting them? The alliance of the King of Sardinia with the French Republic was really an act by which he morally abdicated his sovereignty."

It must be admitted that the authors of these writings reasoned well. They expressed the real feeling of the Executive Directory, as elected on the 18th Fructidor.

All the grievances of the Turin Court, of which these details will give a sufficient idea, were laid open in Paris by the Sardinian ambassador, and in his notes to the French Government he made no mention of Ginguéné. Certainly the latter seemed to exercise little influence on the Generals of the army of Italy, who every day showed themselves more favourable to the insurgents, and openly supported them in every place. These grievances were for a long time unnoticed. At last, on the 1st Prairial, year VI. (May 20, 1798), M. de Talleyrand wrote a reply to the pressing notes of M. de Balbi.

The Minister begins by disavowing all participation in the disturbances then taking place in Piedmont, and protests that the French have no share in them. But at the same time he declares his conviction that those Piedmontese who have joined the insurrection have been misled, and that immediately on being warned that they are the

unconscious instruments of crime, they will hasten to return to their allegiance. "Consequently," he adds, "the ambassador of France at the Sardinian Court is instructed, first, to ask for an immediate and entire amnesty in favour of the Piedmontese insurgents who have taken up arms. He will afterwards press the Sardinian Government to use its strength against any gatherings of *berbets** which may still exist in the country.

"On these conditions the French Government promises to use all its influence with the Cisalpine and Ligurian Republics, to maintain them in tranquillity and within the territorial limits assigned to them."

It will be recollected that this almost derisive letter, and which advances so curious a doctrine, is written by the same Minister who, four months previously, had blamed me for my endeavours to check the unheard-of cruelties that were perpetrated upon Sardinian subjects, far less guilty than the insurgents in Piedmont.

The Court of Turin, driven to extremity, ordered its ambassador in Paris to sign any kind of convention, in order to put an end to the insurrection. But the French Government refused to treat directly, and referred the negotiation to Ginguéné, notwithstanding the dislike to treat with that am-

* These *berbets* were brigands, no doubt, but at that time they were supporting the King's cause.

bassador, which was manifested by the Sardinian Minister.

Ginguéné, having been authorised to begin the negotiation, went first to Milan to consult with General Brune, and on the 5th Prairial (May 24) handed a note to M. de Prioca, which, both in style and in arrogant requirements, far exceeded the instructions sent from Paris. Its language is that of a man who cannot conceal his satisfaction at being authorised to indulge his feelings of enmity against the Cabinet of Turin; and, with a singular disregard of diplomatic customs, Ginguéné hastened to despatch a copy of his note to the French ambassadors at Naples, Milan and Genoa. He even wrote privately to M. de Talleyrand, to urge him to have this note published in the French newspapers—so greatly did he think his literary and republican reputation interested in it.

The Sardinian Government, justly offended by the tone of this communication, despatched a courier to Paris to renew the request that the negotiation should be carried on in that city, but the application had no success. In proportion as the internal situation of Piedmont became more critical, by reason of the insurrections which broke out in all parts, so did the Executive Directory become more exacting. Finally, on obtaining the amnesty, it required that the citadel of Turin should be garrisoned by French

troops, and this demand, repeated in a series of diplomatic notes, each more imperious than the preceding, was acceded to at a Conference which took place on 8th Messidor (June 25) between Ginguéné and M. de Prioca. The treaty regulating the conditions of this garrison was signed, not at Turin but at Milan, by General Brune and M. de St. Marsan.*

The political existence of the King of Sardinia was virtually at an end; by giving up his capital he ceased to reign.

The occupation of the citadel of Turin inflamed to the highest degree the enmity of the Piedmontese towards the French, and the patriotic party instead of being strengthened by this circumstance was weakened. All the men of elevated minds whom it had comprised felt that their national honour had been wounded, and withdrew, so that the party soon consisted only of intriguing malcontents, who hoped to enrich themselves by the misfortunes and humiliations of their country. These deep and well-founded sentiments of enmity could not remain concealed; they showed themselves in innumerable ways, and were the cause of desperate encounters, in which the lives of Frenchmen travelling alone through Piedmont were sacrificed. Ginguéné, on this, recommenced writing his threatening notes,

* The French troops entered Turin, 15th Messidor, year IV. (July 3, 1798).

he insisted that the Sardinian Government should put an end to these hostile demonstrations, that the officials should exhibit good-will towards the French, and in order to attain this end he asked for the dismissal of many of them. Lastly, he wanted the Archbishop of Turin to publish a pastoral letter, recommending his flock to live on good terms with the French. How was it that a man of good sense did not see the absurdity of such a proceeding? Have governments the power of suddenly changing the minds and opinions of the people? Could the violation of every principle involved in the occupation of an ally's capital during perfect peace, could the arrogant and irreligious conduct of the French in the midst of a population attached to the forms of their religion, have any other result than the hatred of the Piedmontese? If that violation was a political necessity, if the occupation of the citadel of Turin was an unavoidable military measure, we should have been ready to stand by its consequences, to look upon the enmity incurred as a necessary evil, to have been on our guard against it and tried to avert its effects; but to request an insulted Government to put an end to it was folly.

However, it would seem that the Executive Directory, though approving in the main what was taking place in Piedmont, would have preferred more suavity and dissimulation on the part of Ginguéné. Their

confidence was withdrawn from him by degrees, and an event happened which, although he was not concerned in it, completed its withdrawal.

The Feast of the Virgin, which falls on the 8th of September, has been from time immemorial celebrated at Turin with great solemnity. It is ushered in by numerous salvoes of artillery; a grand procession winds through the streets; the feast is always looked forward to with eagerness, and the people take the largest share in it. It was therefore feared, with reason, that the presence of French soldiers in the town and the disrespect they might show for the ceremony would occasion affrays and bloodshed. The General commanding the citadel, having taken counsel with the French ambassador, confined the garrison to their barracks, and on the 8th of September not a French soldier was to be seen in the streets of Turin.

But a week later, on Sunday, September the 16th (30th Fructidor), a number of French officers and soldiers, in masks, some dressed as women, or in caricatured costumes of the Court or town, others as jockeys, drove out in the evening from the citadel, and paraded through the town. This scandalous masquerade, intended to ridicule the ceremonies which had taken place on the Feast of the Virgin, displayed itself on the promenades, in the vicinity of the churches, disturbed Divine worship and

gravely endangered the tranquillity of the town. The Piedmontese garrison took up arms, and for a few moments it was feared that a bloody conflict would ensue. The disgraceful farce was disavowed by the General and the ambassador, but its effect was not less fatal. It completed the alienation of the people, it embittered the already existing enmity, and it placed the Sardinian Government at an advantage.

It will always remain inexplicable that the French Generals at Turin, and especially the Commandant of the citadel, should have been ignorant of a project whose execution involved a great deal of preparation ; and the blame of acceding to it, or at least of wilfully closing their eyes, will be justly imputed to them in perpetuity.

These events made a gloomy ending to Ginguéné's mission. He was recalled on the 2nd Vendémiaire, year VII. (September 23, 1798).

Shortly before his departure, the Comtesse d'Artois, who had until then resided unmolested at Turin, was ordered to leave that city.

Such are the principal events which took place in Piedmont between the time of my departure and the beginning of year VII. Those which followed, and which completely ended the drama by the expulsion of the King, and his exile in Sardinia, belong to a later chain of circumstances with which I am not concerned.

As for the rest of Italy ; on the departure of

Buonaparte, the political conduct of the Generals and diplomatic agents everywhere assumed an aspect which closely resembled their policy in Piedmont. M——, who had succeeded Berthier in the command of the army occupying Rome, so mis-conducted himself that the French troops, deprived of their pay while he was appropriating enormous wealth, revolted, and refused to recognise him any longer as their commander. His extortion, his plunder, his shameless rapacity, dishonoured the laurels he had won, at the very moment that the departure of Buonaparte left the field open for him to eclipse the fame of his illustrious rival, and to bear away the palm from the only General who could vie with him in military talent.

The new Roman Republic, established under these melancholy auspices, had only an ephemeral existence.

At Naples, where Garat had acted on the same principles, and made use of the same forms of diplomatic communications as Ginguéné at Turin, there was a commencement of disturbance, in anticipation of the revolution that broke out shortly afterwards, flourished for a while and then came to an end on the bloody scaffolds erected by Cardinal Ruffo, and amid the tragic scenes of an angry Queen's vengeance, which Nelson carried out in order to please Lady Hamilton.

At Milan, Trouvé, a turbulent patriot, with an insatiable desire for innovation, but weak and without capacity ; at Genoa, Belleville, no less extravagant, but superior in nobility of character, and solidity of principle, encouraged and infused life into the revolutionary movement, loosened all social ties and forced the people into republicanism, just as violent fanatics had formerly forced nations into Catholicism. But as none of these innovations were founded either on a change of customs or on newly-acquired and strongly-held opinions, the whole fabric was shattered in a moment, when fortune turned against us, and by all our triumphs, all our brilliant victories, we gained only the enmity and aversion of the peoples. Our glorious conquest slipped from our hands in less time than we had taken to accomplish it, and the first conqueror of Italy had to come back from the banks of the Nile to replace her under the yoke ; as if it were the fate of that beautiful land to submit herself to him only.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Author arrives in Paris—He finds certain changes in the manners and habits of Parisian society—He is received coldly by the Members of the Directory, and by the persons who frequent their *salons* — He sees Bonaparte — The General's motives for undertaking the expedition to Egypt — Popular rising at Vienna, in consequence of which the French Legation leaves that city—The Directory, fearing that war with Austria will break out afresh, decides on sending General Bonaparte to Rastadt—The dangers with which the Directory would be threatened by the ambitious projects of the General, cause them to rescind this decision, and Bonaparte leaves at once, to embark at Toulon—The Author is summoned to join a Council called together on account of disputes in the Department of the Interior—Failures of the Directory in the management of public affairs—Reverses of the French arms—Partial overthrow of the Directory, and Ministerial changes—The Author goes to Holland with Deforgues, who is appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to the Dutch Republic—In passing through Morfontaine he hears that Bonaparte's brothers had sent a communication to the General which may induce him to return to France—Deforgues and the Author travel by way of Lille, Bruges, Antwerp, Rotterdam, Amsterdam and Harlem, and arrive at Alkmaer, the headquarters of Brune—Situation of military affairs in Holland—The travellers proceed to

the Hague—Political state of the country—Capitulation of the Duke of York, and evacuation of the territory of the Dutch Republic by the Anglo-Russian army.

NOTWITHSTANDING the melancholy presentiments which had filled my mind, and been only too speedily verified, I left Italy with regret, and it was not without pain that, from the heights of Mount Cenis, I gazed for the last time at the plains of Piedmont, and gradually lost sight of the beautiful country which at that time I had no hopes of revisiting. I reached Paris on the 6th Floréal, year VI. (April 25, 1798). What a change had taken place during my three years' absence! To the too-simple manners, to the coarse language of the Republic under the Convention, had succeeded politeness of speech, and elegance in manners and dress. *Thee* and *thou* were no longer used; "Carmagnoles" were no longer worn; the women, especially, had returned with eagerness to their former tastes; fashion had resumed her sway, and a passion for the antique regulated her decrees, to the detriment of decency. Not that the luxury and magnificence of a Court had as yet been restored; we had still some steps to take before returning to those. Our habits were still tinged with the roughness we were leaving behind us, and with the contempt for the "convenances" that we had so long professed. Society was not yet formed; there was

no division between its various classes. All was confusion, and the *salons* were crowded indifferently with Contractors and Generals, with women of easy virtue and ladies of the ancient nobility, with patriots and returned *émigrés*. One only thought, common to all, occupied and drew together this crowd of beings differing so widely by birth and education, the desire to acquire money; and all means were good which led to that end. A woman dressed with the greatest elegance, did not disdain the "transaction" of a contract, and would even exhibit specimens of the goods in which she or her *protégé* had speculated. At that time patronage was only to be obtained by a division of profits. Each of the five members of the Executive Directory held a separate Court at the Luxembourg. They had their respective reception days, their own particular circles, their courtiers. But among them all, he who imitated the ways of the nobles of the ancient régime most closely was Barras. He kept horses, dogs, mistresses; his manners were haughty and abrupt; and it was marvellous to see the proud Republicans, the Aristides and Brutus of the Convention, bow down before their new idol and adore his tastes.

I went with the rest of the world, to pay my court at the Luxembourg, but I, had little cause to boast of my reception there. Merlin, in whose

department the 'Exterior Relations' were included, and from whom I endeavoured to learn the cause of my recall, made me a diplomatic answer, and referred me to his Minister, Talleyrand. With the exception of François de Neufchâteau, who received me kindly and invited me to dinner, the Directors either did not speak to me, or barely condescended to look at me. So soon as it was perceived that I was out of favour, all those in the rooms with whom I had formerly been acquainted turned their backs on me also. I became convinced that I was altogether in disgrace, and thenceforth I gave up those fatiguing and useless visits. I merely went, as Merlin had advised me, to call upon Talleyrand. He received me with urbanity, but I could not obtain from him any more light on my destiny than from his Director. He asked me, for form's sake, for a memorandum of my mission and of the state of the country I had just left. I promised to draw it up; but convinced, as I was, that he would not read it, and that it would be pains wasted, I spared myself the task, and I did well, for I heard nothing more either of the Minister or the memorandum.

When I arrived in Paris, Bonaparte* was still there. I saw him several times before his departure

* After the Italian campaign the General discarded the "u" in the spelling of his name, and adopted the French form, "Bonaparte."

and he continued very friendly towards me. He treated me with the same confidence as in Italy, and in our conversations he threw some light on the circumstances that had led him to undertake the expedition to Egypt. I shall narrate them here.

Bonaparte had left Italy, dissatisfied with the Treaty of Campo-Formio, which was signed by him in a fit of vexation at Angereau's appointment to the command of the army of Germany. The conditions of this peace were—and he knew it—altogether impolitic; extremely unfavourable in the present, and still more unfavourable for the future.

In pursuance of what he had told me at Turin, he had gone to Rastadt in hopes of amending his work; but his dislike to Treilhard and Bonnier, the Plenipotentiaries, whom he met at the Congress, and still more, perhaps, the scandalous disunion between those two negotiators, prevented his success, and he returned to Paris entirely absorbed in the idea of a descent upon England.

The survey which we made of the channel and ocean coasts, and the remarks of some able men whom he met on his way,* induced him to abandon this project, whose execution seemed to him, at

* On his way through Calais he closely interrogated M. Gallois, who was returning from England. That gentleman's replies contributed not a little to dissuade Bonaparte from an attempt, which, had it failed, would have fatally injured his reputation.

any rate for the time, impossible. But, having given it up, his impatience of his position, the risks to which he believed himself exposed in Paris, his dissatisfaction with the Directory, whose members dreaded the pretensions of the favourite of Fortune, confirmed him in his resolution to play an isolated part, and to seek at the head of an army that independence which the absolute power he had wielded in Italy had made both a habit and a necessity to him. The world too must be dazzled by fresh exploits, and France prepared for what was to come by the glory of the nation being raised to the highest attainable point. Thus the project of an expedition to Egypt, of which Monge had conceived the first idea during his stay at Passeriano,* assumed consistency, and measures were taken to carry it out. Bonaparte ardently entered into it. He carried away the Government by his fiery speeches and the ascendancy of his reputation, and they on their side were glad to get him out of France, at any price. It was still easier for him to influence men who were greedy of glory, and lovers of daring enterprise. Every preliminary was dictated by him, the decrees of the Directory were minuted by his own hand, and copied out by François de Neufchâteau, the

* Near Udine, where Monge and Bonaparte were during the negotiations of the treaty of Campo-Formio.

youngest of the Directors, who took the place of Lagarde, the secretary; for the latter was not admitted to the secret. In fact, everything was his doing, and it would be unfair to accuse the Government of the day of an enterprise which had such fatal results. Plans, projects, political and military combinations, all were Bonaparte's; the Directory is to be reproached only with having consented to them.

While all was in preparation, rather with affected mystery than really in secret, the unfortunate incident took place in consequence of which Bernadotte and the French Legation left Vienna after a residence there of two months.* Scarcely was this occurrence known in Paris, than the Directory, fearing that it might entail further hostilities, and feeling that Bonaparte would be infinitely useful to them in such a conjuncture, threw themselves completely upon him for aid. By a spontaneous decree, full powers were granted to the General, on whom the task of repairing the mischief devolved.

* Bernadotte, having, as ambassador of France, hoisted the tricolor flag over the door of the Embassy, the populace of Vienna made a disturbance which endangered the safety of the ambassador and the other French there. This led to the withdrawal of the Legation. It is said that Bernadotte hoisted the national colours only in consequence of a reprimand addressed to him on the subject by the Directory.

It was just at this crisis that I arrived in Paris from Turin.

I found Bonaparte pleased both with himself and with his position. He complained bitterly of what he called Bernadotte's mistakes. "See," he said to me, "what they cost us: I must give up the greatest expedition I have as yet planned, in order to return to Rastadt, and I must renounce a project whose execution might change the political face of Europe." But behind this feigned resentment I could easily perceive that his satisfaction was greater than the regrets he expressed; for, by entrusting him with the negotiations occasioned by the Vienna affair, the Directory replaced him in the position he coveted; once more the fate of France and of her Government was in his hands. He was the arbiter of peace and war, he commanded the one or made the other, according as his interest rendered peace or war necessary. Lastly, either as the conqueror of Austria for the second time, or as a worshipped peace-maker, he would return to Paris with his power increased by all the moral influence either title would have given him over the nation, and he would then carry out what, in fact, he did afterwards put in execution on the 18th Brumaire.

But either because he did not conceal his intentions and hopes with sufficient care, so that the

Directory perceived some of the dangers it was amassing about itself, or because a letter written by Bonaparte to Count von Cobentzel * had informed the members of the Directory of the part which the protector, whose support they wished to obtain, intended to play, the Government changed its mind. It was decided that Bonaparte should not go to Rastadt, but that François de Neufchâteau, who was to go out of the Directory in a month,† should undertake the negotiations. Barras was selected to inform Bonaparte of the change, and the manner in which he acquitted himself of his task was, no doubt, one of the causes of the dislike with which Bonaparte regarded him from that time forth.

I am ignorant of the particulars of that interview, but I was a witness to what followed.

I was with Bonaparte on the evening of the 16th Floréal. He had been talking to me a great deal about his journey to Rastadt; the expedition to

* This letter was written unknown to the Directory. Bernadotte's affair was little touched upon, but great stress was laid on the necessity of a new arrangement which would end the difficulties caused by the treaty of Campo-Formio. Thus the question of peace or war was re-opened, and the aim of Bonaparte was accomplished.

† During the first five years of the Constitution of year III., these changes were to be decided by drawing lots, but it had been agreed upon beforehand that the lot should fall to François de Neufchâteau, who was appointed to the Ministry of the Interior as a compensation.

Egypt seemed quite forgotten. He was even telling us of the kind of life he meant to adopt on his return from Germany. Just at that moment Barras entered the room, looking extremely gloomy. He took little part in the conversation, and after a few moments' silence, he and Bonaparte went into an adjoining cabinet.

The interview lasted barely a quarter of an hour. Barras came out first, and passed through the drawing-room, scarcely exchanging a word with Madame Bonaparte. The General next made his appearance, spoke to nobody, and returned to his cabinet, slamming the door behind him. During the night he started for Toulon, and I saw him no more until after the 18th Brumaire.

This anecdote seems to me to explain everything; and when I reflect on what took place before my eyes, I can only see in the expedition to Egypt, which proved so disastrous and so fatal to our navy—sacrificed by the Directory to their desire to rid themselves of a man they dared not openly attack—a fresh proof of the incalculable evils which are inflicted on nations by the private dislikes or the exaggerated pretensions of the men who are placed at their head either by chance or by a fatal celebrity.

Bonaparte, for whom there remained no alternative but that of undertaking this expedition or of losing his position altogether, did not disguise

from himself the risks he was about to run, although at the time of his departure he hoped that the steps taken at Constantinople might obviate some of these risks, and that the Porte would be induced to consent to the occupation of Egypt by France. This, no doubt, was a great delusion, and I shall never believe that Talleyrand, who encouraged Bonaparte on this point more than any one, can have sincerely shared it. Meanwhile Bonaparte, who generally endeavoured to implicate those men whose advice he had followed in any risk that might arise from acting on it, thus obtaining a guarantee against treachery or desertion, had not forgotten to insist that Talleyrand should be sent as ambassador to Constantinople, and when he left Paris he was convinced that Talleyrand would be installed in his new post before his own arrival in Egypt. But this time he was dealing with a man who was more subtle than himself. Talleyrand let him depart, and, foreseeing the issue of the expedition, remained quietly in Paris, where he continued to abet the passions and the policy of the Directors, until the hour when the mistakes of that Government and its consequent reverses dragged down the Minister in the fall of the Directory. It was thus that Talleyrand got the better of Bonaparte, whom he supported neither in Paris nor at Constantinople, and also of François

de Neufchâteau, who had consented to go out of the Directory only on condition of succeeding Talleyrand, but had to content himself with the Ministry of the Interior.

Bonaparte's departure left me in Paris quite isolated from public affairs. I saw neither the Directors nor the Ministers, who distrusted me on account of my intimate relations with the General. I then attached myself more closely to Joseph Bonaparte; but he had little influence. Perhaps the friendship he evinced for me was one reason why the Government gave me no further employment. However, François de Neufchâteau, the Minister of the Interior, having appointed a Council to advise him on the affairs of his department, I was named one of its members. But events were hurrying on, and I was destined shortly to return to the stormy career of politics.

The Executive Directory, having vanquished the National Representation, which was decimated on the 18th Fructidor, and having rid itself of Bonaparte, who had so powerfully contributed to the success of that fatal day, had failed to profit by its victory—had indeed made one blunder after another from that moment. The Administration of the Interior, the general policy and management of the war, were all marked at the end of year VI., and during the first nine months of

year VII., by total incapacity. Victory had altogether forsaken the French flag, and notwithstanding some partial successes obtained by Generals Championnet and Joubert, the arrival of Suwarrow's army, the surrender of Mantua, and the defeat of Macdonald on the Trebia, had caused our loss of Italy. War was again declared with Austria;* the Congress of Rastadt was broken up, its last sittings being marked by the assassination of the French Ministers, Bonnier, Roberjot and Jean Debry; a terrible event whose causes have not been completely ascertained even yet. The opening of the campaign against Austria had been unfortunate, and the retreat of General Jourdan before the superior forces of the Archduke Charles, which, although admired by military men, was fatal to France, had reduced us to a perilously defensive attitude. Switzerland was invaded by the Russians and the Austrians, who were restrained with difficulty by Masséna and Lecourbe. The ancient frontiers of France were already endangered, and insurrection was again raising its head in La Vendée and the other Western Departments. So many reverses, misfortunes and ill-advised combinations, had exasperated the public mind, and the Directory, assailed by reproaches and clamour on all sides, was unable to withstand the storm. The Legislative

* On the 2nd Ventôse, year VII. (March 12, 1799).

Body, supported by public opinion and by a new Jacobin Club, which held its meetings in the Riding-School of the Tuileries,* could now retaliate on the 18th Fructidor, and in its turn dismissed three Directors. By these fresh attacks on the Constitution of year III., the way was prepared for its complete destruction.

The three dismissed Directors, Merlin, Lareveillère-Lepaux and Treilhard, were replaced by Gohier, Roger-Ducos and General Moulin, three men hitherto unknown. Barras and Sièyes remained. The overthrow of the Directory involved that of a portion of the Ministry. Cambacérès was made Minister of Justice; Quinette, Minister of the Interior; Reinhart, formerly my colleague at the Foreign Office, succeeded Talleyrand in the same office; and Bernadotte was made Minister of War.†

The departure of François de Neufchâteau was soon followed by the suppression of the Council of which I was a member. However, as Bernadotte was brother-in-law to Joseph Bonaparte, with whom I had continued on friendly terms, the latter thought I should do well to return to the War

* On account of its meeting in this place, the Club was known, during its existence of seven or eight months, as the "Club du Manège."

† This little political revolution occurred on the 27th to 30th Prairial, year VII. (June 15 to 18, 1799).

Department, and proposed me to the Minister as Secretary-General. But Bernadotte, who was just then completely devoted to the new Jacobins, and surrounded by the most violent members of the Riding-School Club, on whom he bestowed every vacant place in his department, did not consider me sufficiently patriotic, and declined to accede to Joseph Bonaparte's request.

This annoying state of things had lasted for four months, when an accidental circumstance came to my aid, and caused me once more to leave Paris.

Deforgues, of whom I had occasion to speak in the second chapter of these Memoirs, and to whom I owed my entry into a diplomatic career, was appointed in Vendémiaire, year VIII., as Minister Plenipotentiary to the Batavian Republic, where he was at first to be associated with, and afterwards to succeed, Florent-Guyot, then at the Hague. Deforgues, with the consent of the Directory, made me an offer to accompany him, but without an ostensible position. A letter from the Minister of Exterior Relations entrusted me only with a financial negotiation at Amsterdam, for the purpose of claiming for France the Batavian scrip that belonged to us, as payment of the contributions agreed upon between the two States, and which had been deposited in that city.

I eagerly embraced this opportunity of escaping from the trying position in which I found myself, and I accepted both Deforgues' proposition and the mission offered me by the Minister of Exterior Relations, Bernadotte, who had not been able to agree with the Executive Directory, had already left the War Office. He was succeeded by Dubois-Grancé, a still more ardent patriot than he, but who did not entertain a similar prejudice against me.

I left Paris on the 13th Vendémiaire, year VIII. (October 5, 1799), just as the news was arriving of the victory, or rather the succession of victories, gained by Masséna over the Russians in his fourteen days' fighting before Zurich; memorable days during which Masséna displayed the highest military talent.

Never was victory so disputed, never was victory more necessary. France would have been invaded had Masséna been defeated.

In passing through Morfontaine, I stayed with Joseph Bonaparte. He approved my reasons for leaving Paris; but at the same time let me see that he hoped my absence would not be long, and that the return of his brother would bring it to an end. On this occasion he told me that means had been found of informing the General of the situation in France, and even of sending him an order of recall, to which the signatures of the members of the

Directory had been obtained from them unawares, while they were signing other papers. Bourbaki, a Greek, long attached to the Bonaparte family, had undertaken to convey the message and the order to Egypt, for the sum of 24,000 francs (£960), which had been handed over to him. The two brothers, Lucien and Joseph Bonaparte, the contrivers of this clever device, were waiting impatiently for news of the result. The only return I could make for their confidence was by earnest wishes for their success. At that time I regarded Bonaparte's return as the happiest event that could befall my country. He, alone, seemed to me able to save her from the ruin now impending; and on resuming my journey I carried with me at least a glimmer of hope which consoled me for the necessity I was under of separating myself from my family and of leaving France.

We journeyed through Lille, Menin, and Bruges, whence we intended to go on to Zealand; but Deforgues, who was in haste to reach Holland, having relinquished that idea, we crossed the Scheldt, and proceeded to Antwerp, where we stayed one day. In spite of the preparations for commerce made at the mouth of the Scheldt, the city remained deserted and without trade. There were no signs that she would ever recover her ancient splendour.

We left Antwerp for Helvoetsluys on the 13th Vendémiaire (October 9), and arrived there, after a most fatiguing day, at ten in the evening. Helvoetsluys is situated on the Bies Bosch, and both wind and tide being favourable, we embarked at night on a decked vessel, which brought us to Rotterdam in six hours. I had already (in 1788) made a pleasure trip to Holland, but the pleasure with which I contemplated the aspect of that city when approached from the Meuse was quite new. The approach to Venice by the lagoons has been greatly admired; I was now enabled to compare the two points of view, which in some respects are much alike, and I do not hesitate to give the preference to Rotterdam.

At Rotterdam we were but a few leagues from the Hague. Deforgues, however, thought it of great importance to see General Brune, before making his mission officially known, and the General was just then at the extremity of North Holland. We therefore avoided the Hague, and travelled by land to Gouda, and thence to Amsterdam. It is when journeying along this route that a fair idea of Holland may be gained. Nothing can equal the charm of the landscape; the eye dwells with delight on the emerald-green pastures, with their herds of cattle, on the innumerable winding canals covered with constantly moving vessels. While the heart is

gladdened by this rich and smiling panorama of peace and plenty, which, in spite of its monotony, is always fascinating, the imagination is struck with amazement by the works that have been undertaken, by the victories won over Nature, in order to wrest these half-submerged lands from the waters, and to turn pestilential and uninhabitable marshes into delightful gardens and fertile pasturage. These miracles of art, these noble results of liberty, rank in the estimation of a friend of humanity far above all the marvels of antiquity.

We slept at Amsterdam, and on the next day, the 20th Vendémiaire (October 12), we started very early in the morning to make our way through Haarlem to Alkmaer, the headquarters of the French army in North Holland.

The road alongside the canal from Amsterdam to Haarlem is a very fine one. Halfway between the two towns are the sluices which preserve communication between the Lake of Haarlem and the gulf called Het Y.* The waters of this gulf are, at high tides, higher than the surrounding land, and in the construction of the dykes every means has been

* Het Y, properly the Greek I, on account of its shape, is a mass of water which issues from the Zuyderzée, and is connected with it by the Strait of Pampus and by the canal on which Amsterdam is built. The canal bears the same name as the river. Het Y spreads far over the country, where it takes the name of *Breite Wasser*, Wide Water.

resorted to, to restrain this mass of water, which would inundate all Holland. The dykes present the appearance of a wide belt, following and marking out the outline of the gulf. They are closed at the lower end by a wattle-fence, against which is an embankment of earth supported by strong piles, in close proximity to each other. There are four sluices, placed two by two, in parallel lines. Two of them open on to Het Y and two on to Lake Haarlem. The sea beats unceasingly against this barrier, and its waves, which seem to threaten destruction to the low-lying land, have for three centuries broken against it in vain, nor succeeded in breaking it down. At low tide the level of the waters of Het Y becomes lower than that of Lake Haarlem, and the sluices can then be opened to let out the overflow of the lake into the sea, and thus diminish the volume of its waters.

After admiring these daring and splendid works, we continued our way by Haarlem, Beverwick, and Castricum, traversing the battle-field where, a few days before, the French had gained a decisive victory over the united forces of the English and Russians. We at last reached Alkmaer on the evening of the 20th Vendémiaire.

The following is a sketch of the military situation at that time :

The English had appeared on the Dutch coasts,

near the Helder foreland, in the middle of August 1799, and had seized on the Dutch fleet stationed at Texel. The crews of these vessels, having been previously bribed, had mutinied. The English had, at the same time, effected a landing, and notwithstanding some opposition offered by General Daendels at the head of the Dutch troops, they had taken up a position in the Zype.* Meanwhile, General Brune, having been despatched by the Directory to command the French and Batavian troops, had arrived at Alkmaer, on the 17th Fructidor, year VII. (September 3, 1799). But the division which were to form his army not having come up, he had not been able to act on the offensive, and had restricted himself to checking the enemy. The English army in the meantime, having been reinforced towards the middle of September by the first division of the Russian troops, comprising from twelve to thirteen thousand men, mustered from thirty to thirty-five thousand. This force was commanded by the Duke of York, who resolved on attacking General Brune before he should have been joined by the troops he was expecting from Belgium. The

* A large tract of land in North Holland, formerly uncultivated, but which had been tilled by the labours of the Dutch. The canals and roads which bound or traverse this island, as it may be called, are natural entrenchments, rendering it almost impregnable.

engagement took place on the third complementary day of year VII. (September 19, 1799), in the neighbourhood of Bergen. The victory was undecided, and after the battle the two armies again took up the positions they had held on the previous day. The English once more intrenched themselves in the Zype where they awaited the coming of the second Russian division. General Brune, on his side, fortified his position, and held himself on the defensive.

The two armies remained thus until the 11th Vendémiaire (October 3), on which day the Duke of York led a general attack on the French and Batavians. General Brune evacuated Alkmaer, and fell back on an excellent position, fixing his headquarters at Beverwick, about seven miles from Haarlem, where, having received considerable reinforcements between the 12th and 13th Vendémiaire, he maintained his defensive attitude. Lastly, on the 14th Vendémiaire, the Duke of York, unable to draw the enemy out of his position, made a desperate attack along the whole line of the Gallo-Dutch army. This affair, which took place between Beverwick and Castricum, was very bloody and undecisive from daybreak till nightfall, when Brune himself, charging at the head of his column, forced the English to relinquish the battle-field. All the advantages gained on that day were, however, by no means fully known. The first despatches of

the General confined themselves to announcing his repulse of the enemy, and the capture of fifteen hundred prisoners.

It was not until the next day that the brilliant results of the victory were properly appreciated. The English abandoned all the positions they had held a few days before, and returned once more to the shelter of the entrenchments of the Zype, after evacuating Alkmaer, and all the towns of North Holland. The French and the Batavians re-entered these towns on the 16th Vendémiaire, and even took possession of several places they had not occupied before their retreat, and which enabled them to press the enemy still more closely.

Such was the position of the armies when we saw General Brune at Alkmaer. He was full of hope and confidence as to the issues of the campaign, and did not for one instant doubt the success of our arms. He only hesitated to attack the enemy in his formidable entrenchments, because an attempt to force them would entail great bloodshed. On this account he thought it well to examine whether it would not be wiser to wait until the difficulty of obtaining supplies, and the approach of the winter, which would soon prevent an embarkation, should determine the Duke of York to capitulate.

The General was ill-disposed towards the Batavian Government. He seemed to have no doubt that some

of its members had come to an understanding with the English, and as a proof of this, he cited the confidence displayed by the Duke of York in the goodwill of those magistrates which, according to him, had induced the English to undertake the expedition.

We left Alkmaer on the 21st Vendémiaire, and the following day we arrived at the Hague.

For the clear comprehension of the events that took place during my stay in that city, and which I shall have to narrate, a succinct account of the political state of the country is necessary.

Holland had been conquered by the French in the middle of the winter 1794, 1795. Pichegru had entered Amsterdam the 21st Nivôse, year III. (January 10, 1795). The Stadtholder had fled; the English had re-embarked, and the whole of Holland, left to herself, had imitated France and adopted a Republican Constitution. But this Constitution had been of slow growth. The habits of the Dutch, who are more phlegmatic than we are, the obstacles raised by the numerous and powerful partisans of the House of Orange and of the feudal system, had prolonged the debates on the form of the Constitution for more than two years. Two National Assemblies had met successively in the years 1795, 1796 and 1797, and the result of their labours, on being submitted to the approval of the Dutch people, had been rejected. The Public Administration, existing

provisionally under the name of States-General or National Assembly, was almost paralysed, and this state of things, sedulously fostered by the enemies of France, laid the country open to foreign invasion at a time when the fear of renewed hostilities in Germany prevented our retaining sufficient troops in Holland for the defence of that country.

In this dangerous conjuncture the Executive Directory in Paris, which never acted except in an irregular manner, could find no other expedient than a Coup d'État, whose result, being similar to that of the 18th Fructidor in France, would overthrow the Stadtholder's party and the Federals, and would throw the direction of affairs into the hands of the Patriots, as they were called at that time.

This Coup d'État was effected on January 22, 1798 (3rd Pluviôse, year VI.). A kind of popular insurrection having occurred, the principal members of the Provisional Government and twenty-two deputies of the National Assembly were arrested, the acts of the last States-General were annulled, the unity and indivisibility of the Batavian Republic were proclaimed, and the National Assembly took the name of Constituent Assembly. Following the example of the capital, the provincial administrations and the municipalities were changed, the Federalists were exiled, and the party of the Patriots was everywhere triumphant. The new Constituent Assembly acted

with as much celerity as the preceding Assemblies had acted with procrastination. An Executive Directory was appointed, and in two months a new Constitution was drawn up.

This was adopted on March 17 (27th Ventôse), and was submitted for the sanction of the Dutch people, who, being gathered together in primary assemblies on April 23 (4th Floréal), bestowed their approval on it. The Constitution was an exact reproduction of that of France; there was a Legislative Body divided into two Chambers, and consisting, when first formed, of two-thirds of the members of the Constituent Assembly; an Executive Directory, Ministers, &c. A general fête, held on May 19, 1798 (30th Floréal, year VI.), inaugurated the new Institutions. But, notwithstanding this outward demonstration of universal satisfaction, the various parties were by no means reconciled. The so-called Patriots, so soon as they had seized on power, abused it, removing from their places and prosecuting all those who were not exclusively of their opinion, and arousing discontent that was justified by their conduct. They estranged, in particular, General Daendels, a man of an enterprising spirit, and of justly deserved military reputation acquired under Pichegru and Moreau. The General seemed first to approve of the events of January 22, but when he perceived that authority was falling into

the hands of men whose fanatical republicanism he was far from sharing, he became the enemy of the Government, and assumed so threatening an attitude that the Dutch Directory resolved to have him arrested. On being informed of this intention, Daendels fled to Paris. Once there, he curried favour with the Directors, decried the Government of his country to them, and obtained their approval of a project he had conceived for its overthrow, and for the substitution of one more in accordance with his own views.

Armed with an assurance that he would not be disowned by France, the General returned to the Hague, gained over to his party five of the Ministers of the Directory, and, at the head of a few grenadiers, he invested the Directory in broad day and arrested the members. The result of this daring deed was an entire change of the Government and the Administration. A new Directory was formed; Daendels was placed at the head of the Batavian army, and the extreme Patriot party was checked. Thus the supreme power passed into the hands of less fanatical men, better qualified to manage public affairs, but who, like their predecessors, found themselves forced to adopt violent measures for the maintenance of their authority.

More than a year had elapsed since this last revolution, when the English carried out their

project of invading Holland. So soon as it was known that they had appeared on the coast, the Patriot party failed not to spread the report that this attempt was made in consequence of an understanding between the English and the members of the Government, and that the former expected to find the interior of the country favourable to them. Nor indeed can it be doubted that the English really reckoned on this. Their own conduct, as well as the mutiny of the crews of the Dutch fleet, which surrendered to them without having fired a gun, prove that they had made use of means of persuasion, and that they counted on their effect.

We must, however, do justice to the Dutch authorities, who showed more firmness and decision in these critical circumstances than might have been expected; General Daendels, especially, whom the Patriot party had formerly accused of having ungarrisoned the Helder in order to deliver up the fleet to the English, acted with great resolution and courage in the first engagements with the enemy. He was unable to repel them, but he kept them in check until the arrival of General Brune. Shortly afterwards the victory of Beverwick, by dispelling the fears or the hopes which were aroused by the presence of the English, according to the various interests by which men's minds were moved, had strengthened the Government and united the parties,

at least in appearance. The Directory had acquired some confidence, but it was beginning to perceive the advantages that his military successes secured to the French General, and felt more than ever its dependence on France. On the other hand, General Daendels, although this Directory was his own work, became day by day more formidable to it, on account of his overweening pretensions, and gratitude for his services became very burdensome to the Government.

Such was the position of affairs when we arrived at the Hague. The aim of the mission confided to Deforgues was not clearly defined. At the time of the landing of the English in Holland the French Directory, ill at ease as to the consequences of that aggression, and with little reliance in the talents or trustworthiness of Florent-Guyot, whom, nevertheless, they had appointed Minister Plenipotentiary at the Hague a few months before, conceived the idea of giving him a colleague on whom they could more confidently reckon, and who, bearing the same title and invested with the same attributes, would direct affairs in conformity with the views of the French Government. Nothing more wildly extravagant can be conceived. It was evident that the two could not agree, and that the Minister who until now had exercised his functions independently, would never consent to submit to the instructions of the new comer. I was therefore not at all surprised

at the failure of this plan. Florent-Guyot received us very coldly; a long discussion arose between him and Deforgues, in the course of which Florent-Guyot made bitter complaints of the insult inflicted on him, declined to come to any kind of terms, and made us feel that our position was an embarrassing one. On the very next day, therefore, after our arrival at the Hague, I wrote to Reinhart that it was imperatively necessary one of the two Ministers should be recalled. While awaiting a reply to that letter, we could not remain inactive. Deforgues presented his letters of credit, and saw the members of the Dutch Directory, who, being unable to understand this diplomatic anomaly, knew not with which of the two Ministers they ought to deal. Fortunately, circumstances had changed, and fear of the progress of the English arms was nearly at an end. Our mission was therefore almost objectless; only its absurdity remained.

Very soon, in fact, all danger completely disappeared. General Brune had just concluded the terms of a capitulation with the Duke of York, in virtue of which the Anglo-Russian army was to re-embark and evacuate the lands, coasts, islands and seas of the Dutch Republic within fifteen days.* Brune had demanded the restitution of the

* This capitulation was signed at Alkmaer, 26th Vendémiaire, year VIII. (October 18, 1799), between Brigadier-General

Dutch fleet as one of the conditions; but the Duke of York did not hold himself authorized to agree to the restitution, and had confined himself to promising his good offices with the English Government; an intervention from which nothing was to be expected.

The capitulation was, however, advantageous on every point; it put an end to the war, freed the Dutch territory from a formidable enemy, and inflicted disgrace upon the English, while it ruined their credit in the country. These were considerable results, and nothing was wanting to the glory of the French General.

He hastened to the Hague in order to enjoy his triumph.

The flags taken at the battle of Beverwick were presented with great pomp to the Dutch Directory; public fêtes were given, Brune was received with great magnificence by the Dutch Government and was loaded with honours and flattering distinctions. But, in escaping from the English and Russian armies, the Dutch Republic fell under another yoke, no less heavy. Victory had made the French absolute masters of the country; the victorious General demanded large sums of money and constantly complained of not receiving enough. He

Rostolan and Major-General Knox. The text will be found in the *Moniteur* of 5th Brumaire, year VIII.

imperiously dictated laws which had to be obeyed, and, notwithstanding the deference shown to his wishes, his dissatisfaction with the Directory increased in the measure of his exactions. In the course of several conversations with President Van Hoff, I was enabled to perceive how intolerable this state of dependence had become, and that it still further estranged the inhabitants, who were already so ill-disposed towards us. However, far from incurring blame in Paris, the General was encouraged rather to multiply his exactions than to restrict them. He had induced the French Directory to adopt his prejudices against some of the members of the Dutch Government, and particularly against Van der Goes, the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Reinhart, who by having Florent-Guyot recalled, had made our position more tenable, and augmented our influence, wrote to us in a more pacific sense; but Brune paid no attention to our information and laughed at our moderation. In short, he completely carried his point, and on the 11th Brumaire (Nov. 10) we received orders from the Directory to demand the dismissal of the four Ministers: Van der Goes, from 'External Relations,' Pyman, from War; Spoorens, from the Navy; and Gogel, from Finance. All four were disliked by the Patriot party, who could not forgive them the part they had taken in the Revolution of the 12th of June, 1798.

Yet they were men of worth; Gogel, especially, was distinguished as a financier, and was believed to be perfectly conversant with the resources of Holland. It was easy to see by this action on the part of the Executive Directory in Paris that, since the 30th Prairial, and the expulsion of Merlin, Treilhard and Lareveillère-Lepaux, the Government, led by the new Jacobins of the Riding-School Club, leaned exclusively on the extreme Patriot party, and wished to establish it also in the Dutch Republic, by undoing what had been accomplished on the 12th of June, 1798. Daendels, who at this period was at the Hague, had lost all his influence, and Brune gave him no chance of regaining it.

Thus everything announced a fresh political crisis in Holland; and this would inevitably have occurred, with the help of Brune, if the events then taking place in Paris, which were far from being suspected at the Hague, had not forestalled a third revolution.

CHAPTER IX.

The news of the Revolution of 18th and 19th Brumaire reaches the Hague—The Author, who is summoned to Paris to fill the office of Secretary-General to the Ministry of War, leaves the Hague—The physiognomy of Paris—Narrative of the events of Brumaire—Interview of the Author with Bonaparte—Siéyès' plan for a Constitution is rejected—The Constitution of year VIII. is adopted—The Author is appointed a member of the Tribunate—The nature of that Institution—A spirit of opposition within it is developed at an inopportune moment—Rapid increase of the authority and power of the First Consul, who adopts monarchical forms more and more decidedly—Rumours of conspiracies serve as a pretext for arbitrary measures—Fouché and Lucien Bonaparte quarrel violently in the presence of the First Consul—The system of fusion of parties carried out with success by the First Consul.

On the 25th Vendémiaire (October 15) we learned that Bonaparte had landed on the 16th of the same month. From what I knew of the proceedings of his brothers the news did not surprise me. I was calculating the chances that this unexpected event might bring about a great change for the nation. Neither news nor letter, however, came from

Paris to enlighten us, and the Dutch Directory was, or at least appeared to be, in a similar state of ignorance. Brune only had received a letter from Bonaparte, which he showed us. In that letter the General congratulated himself on having "again found *one of his lieutenants* at the head of a victorious army." This expression had greatly incensed Brune; and indeed what more could Cæsar have said? If we had already a Cæsar in our Republic, it was in a bad way. Nothing, however, had yet transpired, and every day I became more astonished at the inexplicable calm. At last, on the 22nd Brumaire (November 13), at seven o'clock in the morning, we received a visit from the President of the Dutch Directory. A courier had arrived during the night, bringing him the news of the events of the 18th and 19th Brumaire. But the slight information that the newspapers afforded us, being only up to the date of the 19th Brumaire, the reserve of the President, who was afraid of committing himself, prevented us from forming an opinion as to the nature of these events, and we did not know whether to rejoice or fear. All I could perceive clearly was that Bonaparte was becoming the arbiter of the destiny of France, and that if he rescued her from the anarchy and degradation into which the Directory and the Legislative Councils had plunged her, it was to be feared,

judging from what I knew of him, that he would make her pay for that service at the price of her liberty.

The President who brought us this news, was, it was easy to see, notwithstanding all his caution, well satisfied with a movement which, by placing Bonaparte at the head of the French Government, saved the Dutch Republic from danger. Brune, on the contrary, whom we saw afterwards, was evidently uneasy; and in the uncertainty as to which party would triumph, he thought it well to be prepared to join one side or the other with his army, and gave immediate orders to stop the march of some demi-brigades which, as they were no longer necessary since the embarkation of the English, were about to return to France. But this notion of opposition to Bonaparte did not last long. A revolution which placed political power in the hands of the military suited the Generals too well to be opposed by them;—a few days later Brune wisely declared his adherence to Bonaparte, and thenceforth served him honestly.

We passed the 23rd Brumaire in great anxiety. At last, in the evening, full particulars arrived, and the first impression I received from them was, I admit, a very painful one. The Legislative Body had been ignominiously dismissed, the Constitution of year III. completely upset, and liberty seriously imperilled.

The names of those who had been actors in this Revolution, or who had been privy to it, and whose principles were known to me, were, however, reassuring; I could not believe that such men would lend their aid to one who avowed himself inimical to those principles. I was therefore in the state of restlessness which is always produced by events not thoroughly understood, when I received despatches from General Berthier, who had just been appointed Minister of War, and who sent for me to fill the very place of Secretary-General which the Patriot Bernadotte had refused to give me a few months previously. I soon made up my mind to accept the offer, although as yet I was unable to form an exact idea of what had taken place, or to judge of it with coolness. Brune gave me a letter for Berthier, and said sufficient to let me see that he had relinquished his warlike projects. I saw M. Van Hoff, the President of the Dutch Directory. He had great hopes in the new order of things now in preparation, and flattered himself that he should be rid both of Brune and Deforgues, whom he disliked equally. I also paid a visit to M. Van der Goes, Minister of Foreign Affairs, against whom the French Government was strongly prejudiced, and on whose dismissal it imperatively insisted. Van der Goes complained with great moderation of the unjust persecution he had suffered, and at the same time showed no anxiety

respecting its result. Nothing could have happened more opportunely for the Dutch Government than the 18th Brumaire,* and he was quite aware of this. Deforgues, on the contrary, was grieved at my departure, and very anxious about his own future prospects. His anxiety was not unfounded, for shortly afterwards he was recalled from the Hague, and succeeded by Sémonville.

I began my homeward journey on the 26th Brumaire (November 17), and left Holland regretting that I had been unable to acquire a more thorough knowledge of the country. The short term of my second stay in Holland had confirmed me in the opinion I had formed of the moral excellence of its inhabitants, and of the domestic virtues generally prevailing there. I had beheld with regret the conduct of the French Government towards a nation which offered it such valuable resources, and whose good-will it would have been quite possible to gain. But we had delivered it over to schemers, harshly subjected it to military authority, and had made ourselves hated. It was only force that held Holland to France, no other point of contact had been touched. The Paris Directory, which had despotically oppressed Holland, was no

* The 19th Brumaire, rather, for it was on that day only that the Revolution took place. Nothing decisive occurred on the previous day.

longer in existence, and her greatest enemy was overthrown ; was she destined to be happier and more independent under the new power which had just arisen in France ? The lapse of time has answered that question in the negative.

I was impatient for fuller information, and I hastened on to Paris as quickly as possible. I arrived there on the 1st Frimaire (November 22). The capital seemed very quiet ; satisfaction and hope were expressed in every countenance ; great things were expected of the newly-accomplished Revolution. But I was surprised to find that very different versions were given, not only of the causes of that revolution, but even of its events. I made great efforts to solve the mystery that seemed to envelope the facts. A knowledge of these things was indispensable, both to put an end to my state of uncertainty and for the ordering of my own conduct. My friend Gallois rendered me a great service in this uncertainty. He was an eye-witness of the events, and being a profound and unprejudiced observer, he was peculiarly fitted to appreciate them. I will therefore give his own narrative, which is indisputably accurate and perfectly impartial.

On Bonaparte's arrival in France, he desired to protect himself from the risks of a state of inaction such as had subsisted during his former stay

in Paris, before his departure for Egypt. He found the conjuncture favourable to his wishes. The Directory, so to speak, no longer existed. The unfit and unknown men who had been appointed to it after the 30th Prairial inspired neither respect nor fear. Barras, who was now irretrievably discredited, was concluding a reign usurped too long. Siéyès, only, had still a party, but he was eager to secure the adoption of his own plan of a Constitution, and ardently desired a revolution which would allow him to bring his composition to light. Talleyrand undertook to bring together the two men, who, with very different ends in view, were yet agreed on that one point, the overthrow of the existing order of things. To Bonaparte he said "You want power, and Siéyès wants a new Constitution; unite together to destroy that which now exists, since it is an obstacle to both of you." He said to Siéyès, "You wish to put your theories in practice, and all that Bonaparte wants is a guarantee against the Jacobins, and a post in which he will be safe from their attacks. Join him then; he will give you the practical means you require, and you will ensure him the place he is seeking."

The ice being broken, a Committee was formed, consisting of Bonaparte, Siéyès, Talleyrand, Roederer, Cabanis, Lucien Bonaparte, and Regnier of the Council of the Ancients. In this Committee

the elements of the Revolution of Brumaire were discussed and arranged. When the first steps had been agreed upon, a few persons were admitted to confidence; among these were Volney and Boulay (de la Meurthe). It was decided next, that the Commission of Inspectors of the Council of the Ancients should be informed of the resolutions that had been come to. But it is to be noted that the latter were not entrusted with the secret of the plan in its entirety; they were spoken to only of the necessity of crushing the Jacobins, who were becoming more dangerous every day, and that they consented solely in view of this to the project of removing the Legislative Body out of Paris. The same motive acted on the Commission of Inspectors of the Council of the Five Hundred. The real aim, change of Constitution, was concealed from all those who were not comprised in the Committee.

Every one knows perfectly well what took place on the 18th Brumaire. The proposal to transfer the Legislative Body to St. Cloud was made at the Council of the Ancients, and was adopted. The command of the Armed Force was given to Bonaparte. General Moreau consented to serve under him. Other steps were taken, but that day was, so to speak, one of preparation only. The following day, the 19th Brumaire, was decisive and much more important. Its particulars are less well known,

because it was the interest of the victorious party to conceal many of them.

In accordance with a resolution taken on the 18th Brumaire, the Council of the Five Hundred was convoked at St. Cloud on the 19th. The hour of meeting was nine in the morning. If the Deputies, who arrived in the hired conveyances of the suburbs of Paris, had found the place in readiness and the sitting begun at that hour, there is no doubt that, having had no opportunity of consulting together, they would have agreed without difficulty to the measures proposed to them. The chiefs and leaders of the Assembly would only have had to act on isolated individuals, who, being ignorant of the extent to which measures had been taken for forcing their consent from them, would have been alive only to the danger and uselessness of resistance. But it was otherwise, and through an unaccountable negligence nothing was ready at the appointed hour. The Deputies therefore dispersed into the gardens, where groups soon gathered together; questions were asked reciprocally; it was asked what could be the motive of this extraordinary removal, and a report soon spread that the hidden purpose of the step was to effect a change in the Constitution. From that moment every one was alive to the consequences of so great a convulsion, and the fear of losing an easy position, which would be the inevitable result of

such a movement, and which a great number of Deputies contemplated with dismay, made all those not in the secret cast in their lot with the Jacobin minority of the Council of the Five Hundred.

In such a disposition of men's minds, the aspect of the Assembly at the opening of the sitting was altogether different from what had been expected. Emile Gaudin, who appeared first at the Tribune, was hooted, and cries of "Long live the Constitution of year III.," interrupted his speech. Grandmaison, one of the most extreme members of the Council, turned this movement to account, and proposed to verify the sentiment spontaneously manifested by the Assembly by an oath administered to each member. The oath was taken by every one of the members, including Lucien Bonaparte himself,* to the great surprise of those who, being in the secret of the plan, beheld all the hopes they had indulged vanish in a moment. It was easy to detect astonishment and dismay in the altered countenances of Maret, De Laborie,† and others who had hastened to St. Cloud.

But it was precisely the time required for the "nominal appeal" necessary to the taking of the oath, that gave the authors of the scheme an opportunity of rallying their forces. Under such circum-

* He was President of the Council of the Five Hundred.

† One of Talleyrand's confidants.

stances a delay of two hours was a great chance for them, and they took advantage of it. Bonaparte determined to enter the Assembly; but scarcely had he appeared, when furious cries of "*Hors la loi!*" were heard. "What does this man want?" was shouted on all sides; "by what right does he enter here?" These cries, and especially the words "*Hors la loi!*" seemed to affect Bonaparte deeply; he withdrew, pale and downcast. His retreat increased the boldness of the opposite party, which then found itself in a large majority, and the minority, trembling and discouraged, gave up the contest. The most violent motions were made in succession and instantly carried. Lucien Bonaparte, who was obliged to apologise for his brother, and to excuse him on the ground of the importance of his past services, was without strength or ability to stem the torrent by which the Assembly was carried away. He was withdrawn from this critical position by a picket of grenadiers, who took him from a committee-room and escorted him to beyond the Hall of Assembly.

When Lucien reached the outer court of the Palace, where the troops were assembled and under arms, he declared that force alone could complete what had been begun, and that they must either perish or employ that last resource. He mounted his horse, and vehemently harangued the soldiers, denouncing angrily "the daggers lifted against his

brother," * then, taking advantage of the momentary enthusiasm he had kindled, he ordered a battalion of grenadiers to follow Murat into the Assembly. The soldiers charged, dispersed the Assembly in an instant, and drove out the Deputies. Incommoded by their "togas," and holding their classic headgear in their hand, the discomfited Deputies dispersed into the woods, where many of them, in order to escape the pursuit of the soldiers, left behind them those melancholy symbols of departed dignity. The spectacle was at once painful and ridiculous, an indelible affront which was a signal for a long-lasting annihilation of any true representation of the nation.

The troops who had been engaged in these proceedings left a picket of fifty men in the interior of the Hall, and returned to the courtyard, where they were received with applause. The approbation was, however, not unanimous; many of the spectators regretted that applause should be bestowed upon a deed which, while perhaps necessary to prevent greater evils, was repugnant to every lover of liberty. Some field-officers even expressed their displeasure, and shortly afterwards the soldiers would have refused to obey.

* This was a figure of speech. It has since been represented as a reality, and an assertion has been made that a Corsican who happened to be at St. Cloud turned aside the stroke intended for Bonaparte.

The victory was now won, and the business of the moment was to profit by it. The mistake of supposing that by the consent of the majority of the Council of the Five Hundred an appearance of legality could be given to the purposed changes, and the errors of detail that had been committed, had thrown everything out of gear, by rendering the substitution of force for the ordinary progress of a debate necessary. In truth, there existed now only a usurper, and that usurper was Bonaparte. How would he be looked upon by France? To what danger would he not be exposed by that odious appellation?

In the midst of the general confusion and uncertainty, it occurred to Joseph Bonaparte to assemble the remains of the Council of the Five Hundred, and, with the aid of that mutilated body, to carry out the measures which they had intended to adopt in the complete Assembly in the morning. At nine in the evening about fifty members of the Five Hundred assembled; this fraction was called the majority of the Council. The same thing was done with respect to the Council of Ancients, and that mutilated Assembly passed the decrees, that were published the next day, for the suppression of the Councils, the abolition of the Directory, and the creation of three Consuls.

When we compare this account with those contained in the *Moniteur* and the newspapers of the day, we see how the truth was distorted in official publications, and we also understand the motives of that distortion. We are struck, above all, with the small share taken by Bonaparte in the events of a day which founded his immense power. Although the truth was known to numerous eye-witnesses, and suspected by many others, by the time of my arrival in Paris success had justified the means. The contempt into which the Directory had sunk, the fear of falling once more under the rule of the Jacobins, the hopes awakened by Bonaparte's talents and the fame he had acquired, rendered the Parisians very indulgent to the means which had brought about a result from which increased happiness and increased glory were alike expected. Thus I found all the lovers of their country rallying round Bonaparte; crowds flocked to the Luxemburg where he resided; he was looked upon as the well-spring of wealth and honours, and every one tried to approach him.

I saw Bonaparte on 4th Frimaire (Nov. 25). He embraced me cordially, and received me with the same affection he had formerly shown me. I thought his tone in conversation firmer and fuller than before. His naturally strong mind had gained in vigour under the strain of the perilous expedition

to Egypt, and he was full of courage. As he knew my opinions, he expressed a firm determination to respect public liberty, but at the same time he insisted on the necessity of creating a stronger magistracy than that which had just been overthrown, and inclined towards all that tended to centralise authority. His manners were less abrupt, and he cultivated a more graceful method of speech, but his impatient nature still made itself felt throughout.

Our conversation turned almost wholly on the new scheme of a Constitution then occupying the Commission, which consisted of a certain number of the members of the Council of the Five Hundred and of the Ancients. It seemed to me that he was far from satisfied with the progress of the deliberations. He considered that the part assigned to him in the Government was not adequate, and he had resolved to impart another direction to the labours of the Commission.

I heard a few days afterwards that the scheme of a Constitution as evolved by Siéyès had not met with the success expected by its author. But this check to his vanity received ample compensation in the riches with which he was loaded. In the distribution of a sum of 600,000 francs (£24,000) that was found in the treasury of the Directory at the moment of its overthrow, Siéyès received

350,000* (£14,000), and Bonaparte, in addition, made him a present of the estate of Crône.† He found consolation in the price paid him for the mutilation of his scheme, of which, nevertheless, I will here subjoin a sketch, procured for me at the time by Regnault de St. Jean-d'Angely. It contains some ideas worth noting.

Five authorities govern the Republic :—

1. The Legislative Authority,
2. The Governing Authority,
3. The Executive Authority,
4. The Administrative Authority, and
5. The Judicial Authority.

I. *The Legislative Authority.*

To compose the Legislative Authority, the territory of the Republic is supposed to be divided into large Communes.‡ One-tenth of their population

* This sum was distributed as follows: To Siéyès, 350,000 francs; to Roger Ducos, 150,000 francs; and to Lagarde, Secretary-General, 100,000 francs.

† On this subject the poet Lebrun made the following epigram :

“Siéyès à Bonaparte avait promis un trône,
Sous ses débris brillants voulant l'ensevelir;
Bonaparte à Siéyès a fait présent de Crône
Pour le payer et l'avilir.”

‡ These Communes were much the same as the Sub-Prefectures have since been.

forms the body of Communal Notables. From among these the Communal Administrators are chosen.

Four of these Communes form a Department. The tenth of the Notables of four united Communes form the Notables of the Department. From among these the Administrators of the Department are taken. Lastly, the Notables of the Departments, gathered together and reduced to a tenth, furnish the Notables of the nation. They elect the Legislative Power from among the Notables only.

The Legislative Power is composed of two Chambers, one called the Senate, the other the Tribunate.

Neither of the two Chambers debates. When the Consuls propose a law, they may send to the Tribunate three of their State Councillors, who discuss the project in presence of the Assembly, with three Tribunes previously appointed by the Assembly. After the discussion, the Tribunate pronounces. The law is then sent up to the Senate, before whom it is again discussed by the three Councillors of State and the three Tribunes. The Senate by secret ballot accepts or rejects the proposed law.

II. *The Governing Authority.*

The Governing Authority is composed of two Consuls, one for the Interior, the other for the Exterior. They have a Council of State, whose members they appoint.

The Interior comprises everything connected with the administration of the country; finance, taxes, trade, public instruction, economy, &c.

The Exterior comprises the army, the navy, and political matters.

The Consuls are appointed by a Magistrate called the Grand Elector, who may dismiss them at pleasure.

The Grand Elector has no other action upon the Government than the appointment and dismissal of the Consuls. But he is surrounded with great splendour. He is the head of a body of magistrates known by the name of Conservators, and is appointed by them, as will be seen hereafter.

These Conservators, a hundred in number, are chosen from the wealthiest classes of society. Each must have an income of 100,000 francs (£4000) drawn from a landed estate. They have a guard and great honorary rights.

Among the hundred Conservators, twenty places are to be kept vacant. They are intended as the means of withdrawing from the Tribunate and the

Senate any individual who either by his ambition or his talent might be dangerous to liberty, and likely to overthrow the order of things. Those members of the two Chambers, who might thus by a kind of ostracism be called into the body of Conservators may refuse to join it, but they are allowed no other alternative; from that moment their legislative functions have ceased.

The Grand Elector is appointed for life. He is balloted for by the Conservators.

Six ballots are taken during the first year, independently of that one which will have brought about the first nomination. These six ballots are secret, and deposited in a closed urn. Every year the body of Conservators will hold a fresh ballot, and one of the former ballots will be annulled, so that there will never be more than six. These six ballots in constant existence serve for the nomination of a new Grand Elector in case of death, or in case he should be recalled to the rank of a simple Conservator, by the joint will of the body of Conservators.

III. *The Executive Authority.*

The Executive Authority is entrusted to the Ministers of the Interior and of the Exterior, dependent on the Consuls of the Interior and of the Exterior.

There are six Ministers of the Interior and four of the Exterior.

For the Interior: Ministers of Justice, of Police, of Finance, of the Public Treasury, of Internal Administration and Public Works, and of Commerce.

For the Exterior: Ministers of War, of the Navy, of Exterior Relations, and of the Colonies. Under the latter heading are comprised not only the Colonies properly so called, but conquered territories, and the Departments as a whole. Each Minister has a special delegate in each Department.

IV. *The Administrative Authority.*

The Administrative Authority comprises the administration of the Departments, the Communes, and the Municipalities. It regulates the distribution and the collection of the public taxes.

V. *The Judicial Authority.*

The Tribunals and Courts of Justice

Such was the scheme presented by Siéyès to the Commission entrusted with the task of drawing up a new Constitution. It was easy to predict its fate. It is a metaphysical day-dream, a sort of machine ready wound up, which supposes in mankind an entire absence of passions and will. How can we conceive of a Grand Elector contenting himself with

the simple part assigned to him, concerning himself not at all in public administration, and of two Consuls who might be dismissed by a magistrate necessarily incapable of judging of their conduct and their intentions, since he was never to be allowed to know them? The six urns containing the votes, of which a portion was each year to be annulled and renewed in order to avoid the introduction of the hereditary principle or the intrigues of an election, were but a way of evading the difficulty without solving it, and had, moreover, the grave disadvantage of being open to ridicule—and in France nothing can stand against ridicule.

The practical impossibility of this scheme struck every one. Bonaparte, who was destined for the post of Grand Elector, was not the man to content himself with such a part. That of Consul would have suited him no better. Never would he have consented to depend on the will or the caprice of another. He craved for real power, not its outward show; he knew well that were authority once in his hands, the outward show would not long be wanting.

So soon as the rejection of Siéyès' plan was decided upon, it became necessary to substitute another in its place, and the Constitution of the year VIII., as it was called, was adopted. But it was unfortunate that the Commissioners worked on

the canvas of Siéyès. Their labours bore in every part the impress of the original design and of the influence exercised over them by the victor of the 18th Brumaire. A First Consul was substituted for the Grand Elector, a Senate for the Body of Conservators, and the worst part of the scheme, that which condemned the Legislative Body to absolute silence, was retained. From this fatal device may be dated the overthrow of those barriers which might have saved France from invasion by despotism.

The shallowness of the French character on the one hand, and on the other the fear of again falling under the yoke of the Jacobins, from which the new "social act" and the well-known character of Bonaparte guaranteed the nation, caused this Constitution, however imperfect and however dangerous to public liberty, to be adopted with joyful eagerness. It was debated, resolved on, and presented for the sanction of the people in less than six weeks, and in Nivôse, year VIII. (January 1800), all the new institutions were at work. Bonaparte, First Consul, was residing with Lebrun, Third Consul, at the Tuileries; and Cambacérès, Second Consul, was occupying a house on the Place du Carrousel.

The establishment of the Constitution of year VIII. opened a new career to me. After having for two months filled the place of Secretary-General for War,

I was appointed a member of the Tribunal, and was present at the first sitting of that body, which took place on the 11th Nivôse (January 1).

The Tribunal was the sole guarantee of public liberty, and it had escaped almost miraculously from the sweeping reduction of the representative system. It was the organised opposition, and the lawful adversary of the Government. But the more this opposition might, in time, become tutelary, the more did it need prudence and moderation to gain the public confidence. Now, at the time of the establishment of the Tribunal, the nation was weary of deliberative assemblies, of tribunal discourses and discussions, and eager for a strong government. A powerful one was indeed necessary to hold in check the monarchical party, which had not been entirely destroyed by the 18th Fructidor, and the Jacobin party, which had revived a few months before under the auspices of the Riding-School Club, and those of Bernadotte and Jourdan.* Public opinion was then clearly in favour of the Government; the Opposition would at first be looked upon as serving the one or the other of these two parties, and not as a whole-

* General Jourdan, as a member of the Council of the Five Hundred, had taken a very active part on the 13th Prairial, when three members of the Directory had been set aside, and he had also opposed the 18th Brumaire. He was among those members of the Council struck out on the 19th Brumaire.

some tempering of the governing power and its excesses. But the Tribune, although it comprised many very enlightened and well-meaning men, had not been so composed that it could adopt that prudent and premeditated course of action which alone could lead to this desirable end. The greater number of the members had been taken from the Councils of the Ancients and of the Five Hundred,* and the remembrance of the day of Saint-Cloud, and of the injury sustained by the national representatives, was still fresh in their minds, and turned them naturally against the author of those insults. Among the new members (and I designate under that name those who, like myself, had not belonged to any Legislative Assembly) there was a desire for distinction and fame, and this led some of them astray; nevertheless, moderate ideas generally prevailed, and wise men recognised the danger of beginning by a contest with the Government, in which the public would have sided with the latter. They felt that time alone could strengthen the Tribune, and that it was only by remaining silent for the present that they could one day acquire the right to speak, and to make themselves heard.

No efforts of the moderate party of the Tribune

* Out of one hundred members of the Tribunal, no less than sixty-nine had belonged to one or the other of these two Councils.

could, however, prevent the blunders which signalled the opening of its political career. At the first sitting, Duveyrier made a speech in which he invited the Assembly to remember the locality in which it was sitting,* and reminded it that within those very walls the Revolution had first seen the light; he besought it to draw from that recollection the energy requisite to oppose Tyranny, should it again raise its head. This invocation, which seemed to justify the excesses of 1789, and to forebode others, was ill-received, and excited suspicions as to the spirit which the Tribune might develop; and the attack, which was inconsiderate rather than dangerous, was speedily followed by a more serious one, by which the Government seemed to be much more alarmed. The Consuls had just sent up to the Tribune the project of law for the regulation of the relations between them and the Legislative Body, with regard to the mode of presentation of projects of law, and the time to be accorded to the Tribune for pronouncing its rejection or adoption of them.

The Commissioners to whom the enquiry into this proposition had been entrusted, and of whom I was one, were in favour of its adoption, although we had perceived that the Government reserved to itself

* The Palais Royal, which then took the name of Palais du Tribunal.

certain advantages which tended to augment its own influence. But, on the one hand, the objection to conferring on the Tribune the monstrous privilege of paralysing every political measure, by allowing it to defer deliberation on projects of law at its pleasure, and on the other, the necessity of deciding as soon as possible a difficult point which ought to be regulated before any other, had prevailed with the Commissioners and a favorable report was presented.

A debate had begun on this report, when, in the sitting of 15th Nivôse (January 5), Benjamin Constant made a speech, in which he pointed out all the defects of the project, did not spare the Government with whom it originated, and cast a portion of the blame upon its head.

The next day Riouffe replied to Benjamin Constant, and went to the opposite extreme. His speech contained a pompous panegyric of the First Consul, couched in language so exaggerated that the orator was interrupted and recalled to the question. Benjamin Constant's attack and Riouffe's clumsy defence greatly displeased the First Consul, and when I saw him, on business, a few days later, I found him very angry. I tried in vain to allay his irritation by apologizing for Benjamin Constant, whose remarkable abilities, which might be so useful in public affairs and also to the Government, de-

served consideration. He would not listen to me. "My enemies," he repeated several times, "my enemies deserve nothing from me but steel." And in fact from that moment he took a dislike to the celebrated orator, whose fame was but increased by persecution, and was not reconciled with him until fifteen years later, on returning from Elba. But Riouffe's mishap did not injure him, and the First Consul, by appointing him to one of the best Prefectures in France, that of Dijon, proved that in the matter of praise, excess, even when clumsy, is never an unpardonable offence in the eyes of a great man.

Thus from the very beginning of the Constitution of year VIII. germs of dissension between the two powers which were intended to balance each other betrayed themselves. The Tribunate, by its premature attack on the Government, lost at the onset the favour of the public, who looked upon it only as the remnant of the former Legislative Assemblies, inheriting some of the same spirit which had so often misled those Assemblies, and threatening the continuation of a revolution of which every one was sick. The Government, on the contrary, gained in authority all that its opponent lost. The farther it diverged from democratic practices, the nearer it approached to those of a monarchy, so much the better did it please the people, and so much the

greater was the influence it acquired. The First Consul, actuated by his secret views and his love of power, was perfectly ready to take advantage of the popular tendency. He diverged from Republican manners by small degrees, imperceptible at first, but becoming every day more marked. From the first, he had held himself apart from the other Consuls. Many of the acts of the Government bore his name only. Very soon the palace in which he dwelt assumed a different aspect. It had been open at first to all the great public officials; but afterwards access was denied them; formalities were required to obtain an audience; a ceremonious etiquette was introduced; and if there were any murmurs at this, the desire to gain access to a magistrate who was the source of all favour, and whose power increased daily, made people submit to it with a tolerably good grace. And then, no sooner had the men who lie in wait for the weaknesses of governments, to turn them to profit, perceived the First Consul's taste for show and the pleasures of vanity, than they hastened to applaud and encourage that taste. "Nothing," they told him, "is more congenial to the tastes of the French, who always like the governing power to be surrounded with pomp and splendour. The Revolution did violence to those tastes, but it has not eradicated them, and they will revive

naturally on all sides." Bonaparte therefore found us ready to submit to these innovations; we anticipated his wishes, and so soon as he desired to have a Court, courtiers were forthcoming.

For my own part, I perceived, even at the commencement of the new order of things, that the scene was being shifted. I had hitherto been on those familiar terms with the First Consul which were kept up by the remembrance of our former association in Italy. But this state of things did not last long. I only saw Bonaparte, thenceforth, at long intervals, and the sort of familiarity that had subsisted between us gradually subsided.

It must not, however, be supposed that, absorbed in the delights which the flexibility of the French character so easily accorded to him, he neglected public business. His indefatigable activity was more than ever apparent. He obtained nearly every law he asked for, from the Legislative Body, and the most important one of all, that which abolished the administration of Departments, and substituted the establishment of Prefectures, was adopted on the report of Dannou.* This law, by concentrating the administrative authority in the hands of Prefects and Sub-Prefects appointed by the Head of the Government, in reality destroyed

* This law dates from 28th Pluviôse, year VIII. (February 17, 1880). It was partly the work of Roederer.

the Republican system. Police, Finance, and Administration passed away from the delegates of the people, to agents appointed by the Government, and who might be dismissed at pleasure. The Government must henceforth be served in all things, by all who desired to retain brilliant or lucrative posts. So well has the institution of Prefectures served the reigning power that it has outlived all others and held its place in every Government that has subsisted since that time.

The triumphs of the First Consul were, however, occasionally disturbed by difficulties at home and abroad, by rumours of conspiracy and the fear of fresh outbreaks of war. The apprehension caused by the rumours of conspiracy was more affected than real; yet it is difficult to believe that those rumours were entirely unfounded. Bernadotte and even Lucien Bonaparte were said to be at the head of the alleged conspiracy. The inordinate self-love of the former, who through Joseph Bonaparte's influence had been appointed Councillor of State, although he had openly proclaimed himself against the 18th Brumaire, rendered it not unlikely that he would yield to the persuasions of the Jacobins, who always regarded him as their staunchest supporter. He was not dangerous in himself, but he might become so during a disturbance, as the instrument of others. As for Lucien Bonaparte,

who was Minister of the Interior, it is true that his immoral policy, the absence of public honesty in his administration, the shameful extortions and insatiable cupidity of his officials, did much injury to his brother's government, but is the story of his projects and his desire to put himself at the head of the malcontents credible? At that time he had nothing more to wish for than what he had already obtained, and he greatly deceived himself if he imagined that his name alone would carry sufficient weight to enable him to play an isolated part.

The rumours of conspiracy, although there was but slight foundation for them, were used as a pretext for various arbitrary measures. Several newspapers, whose too liberal tone was displeasing to the Government, were suppressed.* Exile and banishment were said to be destined for such men as Raisson, Vatar, and others, who during the Revolution had been remarkable for their opinions, and who were regarded as the leaders of the Jacobin party. They were ordered to leave Paris. Madame de Stael also was threatened. She was the patron of Benjamin Constant, who had declared himself so openly against the First Consul as to involve his

* The newspapers suppressed on 18th Germinal (April 7), and re-established since then, were three in number,—the 'Journal des Hommes libres,' the 'Bien Informé,' and the 'Journal des Défenseurs de la Patrie.'

friend in his disgrace. Fouché, at the head of the Police, seconded with marvellous zeal and sagacity the tendencies of the Chief of the Government, for whom he professed at that time indefatigable and boundless devotion; and his former friends, although he privately protected them, were not apparently spared more than the rest. An angry scene took place at this time (18th Germinal) between Fouché and Lucien Bonaparte, in the presence of the First Consul. The quarrel began by an allusion to the alleged conspiracy, sharp words were exchanged, and Fouché went so far as to say: "I would arrest the Minister of the Interior himself, if I knew that he was conspiring." In consequence of this altercation, which increased the First Consul's confidence in Fouché, the question of removing Lucien from the Ministry was mooted, and his dismissal was talked of publicly. But the services he had rendered on the 19th Brumaire were still too recent for this extreme step to be ventured on. The First Consul would have been thought ungrateful, and the matter was adjourned. Nevertheless, the differences between the two brothers, which soon afterwards became manifest, date from that period, and ended in enmity which kept them long apart, and which was scarcely extinguished even by the reverses which afterwards befell the Bonaparte family.

It was at this epoch also that Bonaparte established

that system of fusion among the various parties of which he availed himself so skilfully, and which became the foundation stone of his power. With the utmost sagacity he sought out men of talent, whom he employed wheresoever he found them. Equally inimical to the partisans of the ancient dynasty, to the Jacobins, and even to those who afterwards bore the name of *Liberals*, he took all his agents indifferently from among those three classes. Prefects, judges, administrators, and financiers, were all drawn from them. There was great discontent. The authors of, and actors in, the events of the 18th Brumaire, who thought they had an exclusive right to those appointments, felt injured at having to divide them with men whom they had beaten. It was therefore with extreme disgust that they saw M. Dufrêne, an avowed Royalist, entrusted with the Public Treasury, although his honesty and ability justified the selection, Carnot placed at the head of the War Office, and Merlin (of Douai) appointed Assistant to the Government Commissioner in the Court of Appeal. The two first appointments were indeed approved by all impartial men; but the last excited universal discontent. The appointment of the framer of "the law of the Suspected" to functions so high, and which might so greatly influence the honour and the fortunes, nay, even the lives of citizens, justly

alarmed the whole community.* Other nominations, to less important posts, gave as little satisfaction, and, to use the expression of M. de Ségur, it was hard to reconcile oneself to the Government's "sprinkling Jacobins all over the public service." But the First Consul soared above these timid scruples, and the sequel has shown he was right, so long at least as Fortune was favourable to him. He thus smoothed down all the political asperities of France, rendered those whom he selected from each class 'suspect' by it, and so weakened them all. Lastly, by, as it were, casting into the same mould all the men whom he called to the conduct of affairs, he made them willing subordinates, vying with each other in devotion to himself, and ready to execute, without discussion, all he might require of them; but at the same time he fitted them for the service^{mt} of his own power only. When authority passed into other hands they followed it, and became the most docile instruments of the ruin of him who had indeed elevated, but had then so trained them as to destroy every noble sentiment.

* It would seem that gratitude had something to do with this appointment. It was Merlin, a member of the Directory, who, on 30th Prairial, year VII., proposed the recall of Bonaparte, then in Egypt. A decree sanctioning the proposition had even been passed, but it was not sent. The Bonaparte family contrived to procure a duplicate of this decree, and despatched it to Egypt, as I have related above.

CHAPTER X.

The peace negotiations with Austria are broken off, and a renewal of hostilities is decided upon—The First Consul endeavours to make the people believe in his attachment to the Constitution and to reassure the friends of Liberty—He leaves Paris, to take command of the Army—His victories—The state of feeling in Paris after the departure of the First Consul—Rumours of changes to be made in the Constitution in favour of the power of the First Consul, and for the purpose of introducing the principle of hereditary succession—Discussion on the consequences of the possible death of the First Consul—The news of the victory of Marengo cuts this short, and throws Paris into transports of joy—Great position of the First Consul—His return to Paris—Negotiations for peace are opened with Austria—The dispositions of the belligerent parties—The real designs of the First Consul more and more clearly revealed—His solicitude to gain the affection of the army—Arbitrary condemnation of General Latour-Foissac—Modification of laws concerning the “*émigrés*”—Manifestation of the sentiments of the First Consul on religious matters—Steps are taken to bring about an understanding with the Pope—The hereditary idea makes progress in the public mind—The palace of Saint-Cloud is placed at the disposal of the Government—Great influence of Cambacérès and Talleyrand over the First Consul—The Author is named Councillor of State.

THE establishment of the system adopted by the Government did not depend entirely on its adroitness

or on our weakness—fresh victories were necessary to restore to Bonaparte the *éclat* which had been dimmed rather than increased by the expedition to Egypt, and to the national glory, which only could blind it and conceal the fetters that were being forged for it to wear. War had become necessary, and its success was imperative. By means of war, good fortune and his ability would combine to establish the authority of the conqueror, and the last of our liberties might be buried under his laurels.

Up to the present month of Germinal, year VIII. (April 1800), negotiations for peace had been carried on with Austria, less in the hope of coming to a satisfactory conclusion, than with a view to gaining time for the preparation of another campaign.

At the epoch to which I am now referring, these negotiations had been broken off, and war resolved upon. Berthier had left the ministry and joined the army assembling in the neighbourhood of Dijon, then modestly called the Reserve Army. Bonaparte hesitated, or rather pretended to hesitate, about leaving Paris. In a conversation which I had with him on the 6th Germinal, he assured me he had no intention of going far from Paris, and that if he left the capital for the moment, it would be merely to hold a review, after which he would return. "I don't mean," he said, "to act the General." I said all I

could to confirm him in that resolution; but I soon perceived it to be a feigned one, and that he had really determined upon an opposite course. The First Consul felt his own presence necessary to ensure the success of a difficult campaign, and, above all, he would not leave its laurels to be reaped by any other person. In this conversation, as well as in two other interviews that I had with him, on the 8th and 29th Germinal respectively, he was emphatic in asserting his adherence to the new institutions, and said all he could to reassure me respecting the plans which he had disclosed to me in Italy, and which he now wished me to believe he had abandoned. And, in fact, he almost persuaded me. Besides, how could I imagine his ambition unsatisfied, with the power he had already attained, and which was guaranteed to him by a Constitution cut out, so to speak, by himself.

“There are only three ways,” he said, “of placing oneself at the head of a nation: by birth, by right of conquest, and by an avowed and recognised government. It is not to birth that I owe the place I occupy; I would not wish to appear to owe it to conquest; a Constitution, only, can secure it to me; and I am nothing if that Constitution which has given me my place be not maintained. It can never be for my interest, then, that it should be altered, or that its course should not have all possible liberty.

Let the Tribune continue to sit, otherwise it will be thought that the Government dreads its permanency, or that its existence is immaterial to the actual order of things: this belief would undermine the foundation of the Constitution that rules us, and which alone can maintain me in my position." *

He still held these sentiments, or at least chose to renew the expression of them, in an interview with me which took place on the 26th Germinal. Our conversation turned particularly upon the selection to be made of members for the Tribune, to replace those who had accepted prefectures. He seemed desirous that choice should be made of persons with oratorical pretensions rather than men of ordinary abilities, who would be merely useful in the discussion of laws, and committee work. Considering the annoyance he had felt at the speeches of Duveyrier and Benjamin Constant from the very first sittings of the Tribune, I was astonished to hear him express such an opinion, and I reminded him how, at the time, he and all right-thinking men had disapproved of the Tribune's falling into the ways of preceding Legislative Assemblies, and letting itself be carried

* There had been some talk of adjourning the Tribune after the session of the Legislative Body, but I, with many of my colleagues, had been of opinion that it ought to continue to exercise its functions, even during the vacations of the Legislative Body.

away by declamation. "You are right," he replied, "as regards ordinary times. But circumstances may arise, in which it is absolutely necessary, to save the *res publicæ*, that the Tribunal should be enabled to display energy and vigour which can only be manifested by men who are in the habit of speaking from the Tribune, although those qualities themselves may be possessed by many of its members. Besides," added he gravely, "as a Republican, one ought to foresee everything; the case, for instance, of my own death." This reflection, uttered either spontaneously, or with design, made a strong impression on me, and the dark uncertain future that would follow such an event struck me very forcibly. "I have not dared," I replied, "to contemplate for a moment such a situation, and cannot therefore tell what I should think it expedient to do in such a case, nor how we ought to act." "It is nevertheless necessary," said the First Consul, smiling, "to think seriously about it."

By talking in this style to all who approached him, he endeavoured to reassure the numerous friends of liberty who had begun to grow alarmed, and also to create a sombre idea of the danger France would incur in the event of his death. It pleased him to attribute his success to his good fortune. The ideas of fatalism and predestination that he had introduced into his proclamations in Egypt, he now endeavoured to spread around him

in France, and, believing in them himself, he wanted to make others believe in them. "Cesar," he said to some persons who were with him on the 9th Floréal (April 29), "was right to cite his good fortune, and to appear to believe in it. That is a means of acting on the imagination of others without offending anyone's self-love." On the same day he said, speaking to Gallois and Volney, "Why should France fear my ambition? I am but a Magistrate of the Republic. I merely act upon the imagination of the nation: when that fails me, I shall be nothing, and another will succeed me."

In the meantime the army collected under the walls of Dijon began to march, and advanced by the Rhone Valley. Every preparation was made for the campaign; only the chief who was to lead it was wanting, and he did not tarry long. Bonaparte left Paris on the morning of the 16th Floréal (May 6).

I will not follow him through this extraordinary campaign, which for boldness and success surpasses all that imagination can picture, and which has been described and commented upon a hundred times. As I was not an eyewitness, and as I desire in these memoirs to speak only of what I have myself seen and heard, I shall simply relate what was taking place in Paris, while the most audacious of military enterprises was deciding our destinies.

The departure of the First Consul, which produced a general sensation in Paris, was regarded in different lights, according to various opinions. His enemies—their number increased every day—hoped he might meet with reverses, and flattered themselves that defeat would wrest his power from him; but they kept silence while awaiting the issue of the campaign. His partisans, who were confident of success, did not doubt but that victory would increase his authority, and thinking already to share it, or turn it to the profit of their ambition and their vanity, they openly announced a project for changing the Constitution in favour of more personal power, and introducing the Hereditary Principle. These rumours at first seemed to have been purposely spread from mere malevolence, and I wrote of them in my notes of the 23rd Floréal (May 13), only eight days after the departure of the First Consul for the army, as follows :

“No one seems to doubt that the sole object of these rumours is to bring disfavour and cast ridicule on Bonaparte and his family ; but I, who know the man and his projects ; I, who know that no name would frighten him, attach more importance to them, and I think the question merits serious discussion in our Society.* On discussing it, we were led to the

* This Society, which met on the 3rd of each decade, was composed of the Senators Cabanis, Lenoir-Laroche, and Garat, and

conclusion that, considering the actual state of public opinion, it would not be surprising were such an innovation attempted with success, and that if the idea had originated with Bonaparte—as I was inclined to believe—it would immediately be well received, and neither devisers nor makers of Constitutions, who would undertake to demonstrate that it is compatible with a system of democratic government, would be wanting; for it is marvellous, now-a-days, how we contrive to change things while still retaining their former names.

“I think it well, therefore, for the guidance of my memory, to note down in this place the fundamental points of the plan as it has been expounded to me. In them there will be found a tolerably exact imitation of the English system of government. They include :

“A First Magistrate, who is to retain the title of Consul, or will take another. This is of no importance. The dignity to be hereditary in his family.

“A Senate, or Upper Chamber, composed of the present Senators, and in part of some members of the minority of the nobles at the States General. Their dignity to be likewise for life and hereditary.

“A Legislative Body, or Chamber of Commons, in which the Tribunate and the existing Legislative

of the Tribunes Adet, Girardin, Béranger, Lebreton, Gallois, and myself.

Body will be merged, but whose members shall be elective and removable.

“Such are the materials of the fifth Constitution which awaits us. And who shall venture to say that all this will not take place? Not I, for one. I have become credulous in the matter of Constitutions, and, in truth, the distance is less between that of to-day and the proposed change, than between the Government in existence before the 18th Brumaire and that which succeeded it?”

It is, then, evident that the plans which have since been realised date much farther back than the epoch at which they were openly proclaimed; and the first glimpses of those plans afforded to the public, far from being the result of malice, were, on the contrary, a skilful move in the game; the rumours were set afloat to accustom Republican ears in good time to the detested word “heredity.” But, although the moment to establish this new system had not yet arrived, and in 1800 it might still be looked upon as purely speculative, there was connected with it another question far more pressing, and of the actual hour. This question had been raised by the First Consul himself, a few days before leaving Paris, and it occupied every mind. “What is to be done in the event of Bonaparte’s death? Who is to succeed him?”

The solution of this question could not be a matter of indifference to any party. Friends and enemies of Bonaparte, Republicans and Royalists, all were concerned in it, and all those who possessed any influence discussed it urgently. I myself did not abstain from the general topic. My association with Joseph Bonaparte had become more and more intimate. The gentleness of his nature, his kind heart, the value he placed upon true friendship, had gained him my affection at a moment when I little suspected the influence which that feeling was destined to exercise over my future life. I had left Paris on the 29th Floréal (May 19), to pass a few days on the beautiful estate of Morfontaine, where Joseph Bonaparte then lived, and which he was occupied in improving. There our conversations turned most frequently on the political situation. Joseph had just been named Councillor of State, and I had imagined that the principal object of this nomination was to secure greater influence over the deliberations of that body to the First Consul. "You are mistaken," said Joseph; "my brother had no need to place me in the State Council for any such purpose; the devotion of all its members to him is so thorough, that there is nothing more to be desired in that respect. But I am obliged to look to the future, and calculate on the possible misfortune of the General's death. Since

I am no longer allowed to be "nobody," since, on account of the name I bear, I may not live in the retirement which I should have greatly preferred, I have thought it well to become "somebody" in case so great a misfortune should befall us, and to secure beforehand that influence of which I and my family will have so much need."

This led us to speak of the consequences that might ensue on the event in question: "My brother," continued Joseph Bonaparte, "thinks he ought not to be succeeded by a soldier. 'It requires, as it is,' he says, 'very great tact to control the crowd of generals, full of impatience and overweening pride, who aspire to the brilliant post that I occupy. Where is the man, who, if I were gone, could keep down all these conflicting passions? Mind, I tell you, if I die before the actual order of things has been consolidated by a two years' existence, you will have another Convention after my death.'"

This statement, while giving me much to think of, was but a prelude to the following, made to me during an interview, in which we entered more at length into this question.

Girardin, my colleague in the Tribune, was also at Morfontaine, and a discussion on the subject which so deeply interested us, took place between him, Joseph Bonaparte and myself, on the 11th Prairial (May 31).

Joseph Bonaparte began by asking us whether we knew that a meeting of the partisans of Siéyès had taken place.

On our reply in the negative, he gave us the following details :

“The members of the two Legislative Commissions which succeeded the national representation, broken up by the events of the 18th and 19th Brumaire, re-assembled a few days ago, with the exception of Boulay (of the Meurthe), Lucien Bonaparte, and several other members who were not summoned. The question for discussion was : What should be done if Bonaparte were to fall at the head of the army he commands, and which from the moment it crosses the Alps is in reality in the field ?”

In order to define the situation in which they would then be placed, the meeting assumed the event to have actually taken place, and the news to have just reached them. What course was to be taken ?

All began by agreeing that the Constitution ought to be upheld ; and as the maintenance of the actual order of things gave to every one of them a position of prosperity such as they could not reasonably hope for from a change, they took that as the basis of the discussion. The ground was therefore narrowed to the choice of a successor to Bonaparte.

“Several candidates were proposed in turn. Moreau was the first mentioned, but his name was not favourably received. He had, it is true, great military ability in his favour. At that moment he was victorious, and could perhaps as easily as Bonaparte command peace by his victories — but what guarantee did he offer to those who had composed the Convention and voted the death of the King? He was a patriot of more than dubious principles and conduct: he was suspected of connivance with Pichegru on the 18th Brumaire; he might, at the first shock of events, betray the interests confided to him, treat with Foreign Powers, or even play the part of Monk, a sufficiently tempting rôle to a man of his character, and one which seemed to accord better than any other with the vacillation of opinion he had hitherto manifested.

Brune was next named; but a multitude of objections of an opposite nature were raised against him. As an accomplice of the revolutionary excesses he could only rally round him the remains of a party which had become odious to the sounder sense of the nation.

Both one and the other were therefore set aside by motives which, though differing in origin, had the same cause; the fear of a disadvantageous result for those who were discussing the matter.

Finally, Carnot was proposed, and it seems that

every one was already so well disposed in his favour that the proposition was not so much debated as supported by every argument that the meeting could adduce in his favour. Carnot, they said, had voted the death of the King; in that vote the partisans of Siéyès possessed a sufficient safeguard for themselves. He had been deported on the 18th Fructidor; therefore all the moderate party rallied round him. He enjoyed a great reputation for military capacity; the army would be glad that he should be at the head of the Government. Moreau, whose friend he was, whom he had called the Fabius of France, would answer for the troops under his command, and would counterbalance the wrath of the army of Italy and of the Bonapartists. Lastly, he had supported the Jacobins after the 9th Thermidor, and made common cause with Barrère, Collot, and Billaud-Varennes; thus their partisans would attach themselves to him. So much reciprocal suitability, so many pledges given to all parties, placed Carnot in a unique position. His elevation to power would be a security for all, without being alarming to any.

Echassieriaux,* in particular, supported this proposal. Others spoke at greater or less length, and finally the opinions of all, doubtless formed before the meeting, were brought into unanimity. It was

* A former member of the Council of Five Hundred, now a Tribune.

agreed that another meeting should be held, and it was even proposed that Lucien Bonaparte should be invited to the second conference. They owed him great obligations; he alone, in the new order of things, had upheld the Patriotic party; it was he who by his influence had placed its members in the posts attached to the Ministry of the Interior, and who defended them daily against reiterated attacks. He was not like his brother Joseph, who under a feigned moderation, an apparent incapacity, hid a fiery soul and a boundless ambition. It seems, however, that the meeting broke up without any decision on this last point having been come to.

Such was the account Joseph Bonaparte gave us, and on its conclusion he seemed to expect that we should express our opinions respecting it. Girardin and I were little prepared for such a confidence. As, however, we were agreed in principle, we jointly endeavoured to show Joseph Bonaparte how greatly that proposal, which, according to the account he had given us of the meeting, had been the most favourably received there, was opposed to his own interests; especially as it had been made unknown to him, and apparently without any apprehension that his family might oppose it, or any idea that his consent was needful to ensure its success.

“Carnot,” we said, “was indeed the enemy of Siéyès, and in that respect offered some advantage

to the Bonapartes, but was it to be supposed that he would not conceal or even renounce that enmity from the moment that so brilliant an inheritance was in question? was it, above all, to be believed, that, having attained such an elevation, Carnot would permit the inheritors of the name of Bonaparte, the only men whom he had cause to fear in the career open to him, to retain influence? Moreover, the differences which existed between Carnot and the Constitutional party were only individual; one common principle, the fear of one common danger, united them, and the party of the Convention knew this perfectly well. The Committee of Public Safety was naturally reconstructing itself; and while doing Carnot the justice to separate him from that Committee in so far as the crimes with which it was reproached under the rule of Robespierre were concerned, it would be going too far to believe that he was a total stranger to them.

His conduct in the affairs of Billaud and Barrère proved clearly that if he was not bloodthirsty like them, he was at least the apologist of their actions and had tried to justify them by specious arguments. It might, therefore, be feared that if Carnot were in power he would, perhaps, in spite of himself, bring back the men of the Convention with their principles, an act which would be fatal both to liberty and to the repose of France, just now

beginning to breathe freely, relieved from the yoke she had borne too long.

Objections were indeed plentiful; but while making them, we knew not whom to propose. The great defect in the Constitution of year VIII. was that it made no provision for replacing the First Magistrates of the Republic, and confined itself to enacting that they should be chosen from the list of Notables of the nation, without indicating either how this list was to be drawn up, nor in what manner the election was to take place. In proportion as we became more and more strongly convinced that our governing institutions offered no possible means of security against the consequences which would follow Bonaparte's death, the future of our country presented itself to our imagination in darker colours.

Our first reflections led us to believe that this defect had been intentional, so designed that the necessity of remedying it must one day be recognised, but that great care would be taken not to remedy it until men's minds had been insensibly led to tolerate, first, Power for Life, a temporary means of putting aside the chances of election, and secondly, Hereditary Power, the simplest means of avoiding danger, and to which the first steps would infallibly lead. We perceived so clearly that this was the end towards which we had travelled without being

aware of it, that before the conclusion of the interview, whose principal circumstances I record in this place, we came to the conclusion that the choice of the successor to the First Consul must lie between Moreau, Carnot, and the brothers Joseph and Lucien Bonaparte.

Now it was evident that the two last candidates could only be proposed on account of their name; this therefore was to acknowledge a privileged family. From that acknowledgement to Hereditary Right was but a step. And yet, at what a moment were these novel ideas put forward! The younger of the two brothers who were in a position to aspire to this great inheritance, had the greater force of character and political ability, and had already made himself a name in the Revolution, but he had inspired aversion by his immorality; while the elder was of far superior character, but almost unknown, and had not as yet any hold on public favour. Yet we had to submit to the drawbacks of a system of government vicious in its very essence, and which, being neither a monarchy nor a republic, combined the faults of both, without possessing the decided advantages of either.

Thus all that remained to Girardin and me after our discussion, and the details given us by Joseph Bonaparte, was the certainty that, should the death of the First Consul occur while we were still en-

gaged on these questions, no one could foresee the results of that event, and that it would be impossible to escape from the internal divisions and misfortunes which it would occasion ; but if, on the contrary, Bonaparte returned victorious, and his life was prolonged, the Constitution would be remodelled, and, it was greatly to be feared, not in a sense favourable to liberty.

We did not remain long in doubt. While in Paris all parties were engaged in calculations and projects respecting the entire or divided inheritance of Bonaparte, he was striding on from victory to victory, and the news of the glorious battle of Marengo, which reached Paris on the 2nd Messidor (June 20), put all these ideas to flight, and left in their place only a universal sentiment of astonishment and admiration. Never had the national pride been more flattered, never had the hope of national prosperity risen so high, and never was the nation more disposed to gratitude towards the man from whom it then expected to receive the greatest of all benefits, a lasting peace, the fruit of his victories. For two whole days Paris was drunk with joy. The illuminations were general and spontaneous. The Senate and the Tribune held an extraordinary sitting to receive the messages sent to them from the Consuls officially announcing the great victory, and those messages were welcomed

with shouts of applause. Political enmities and discords seemed to be extinguished, and were at least suspended. Every apprehension was allayed, and no one regretted any longer that so much power had been entrusted to a man who used it so nobly. So great, so unexpected a triumph justified everything.

The victory of Marengo placed France in a more favourable position than she had occupied for a long time. Abroad, she had regained her military glory. The Austrian army had demanded and obtained an armistice. Negotiations for a definitive peace were about to open, and if we did not abuse our victory by exaggerated pretensions, a Continental peace was certain. At home, Jacobinism was destroyed, the partisans of the ancient dynasty were overthrown; liberal ideas began to display themselves openly, and notwithstanding some attempts on the liberty of the press by Lucien Bonaparte, that tutelary guarantee of popular institutions was enabled to hold its own against attack. The public profession of irreligion, and the affectation of a shocking cynicism had disappeared, but the priests, while they were free to exercise their functions, had not yet regained a dangerous influence. No sect had obtained the preference or received a salary from the State. The necessity for a strong government had been felt, but we had not as yet had to blush for a humiliating

servitude. Returning confidence had everywhere brought about a revival of credit. Military glory did not as yet weigh upon the citizens, because soldiers and officers were taken indifferently from all the ranks of society, and returned to them without effort. The army belonged to the country, and had to all appearance victoriously served it only; it had not as yet become the property of the Chief of the State. Science, arts, and letters, began to flourish again, and needed only the establishment of peace to acquire fresh lustre. Public education was based on excellent principles, and, keeping clear of subjects of contention, confined itself to providing the country with enlightened and well-informed citizens. The institution of the Polytechnic School had attained a high degree of perfection. Pupils formed by such men as Monge, Laplace, Lacroix, Fourcroy, and many other celebrated professors, were ready each year for the Artillery, the Engineers, or the Sappers and Miners; and young *savants*, after a few years of instruction from their masters, took their places by their side as Professors in their turn.

What then was wanting to confirm this prosperity and to afford Europe the spectacle and example of a great regenerated people, enjoying liberty without falling into licence, triumphantly led by capable chiefs, but not becoming the slave of those chiefs:—what was wanting for this? a Washington. If

Bonaparte on his victorious return from the field of Marengo had taken that illustrious citizen as his model, what might he not have done for the happiness of France, for his own true glory, and even for the duration of his authority! No resistance was opposed to him—he could do all he wished. The storm of the revolution had swept his way clear, and violently overthrown every obstacle, the ground was levelled and ready to sustain a solid edifice. All the evil was already done; and now all that remained was to consign it to oblivion, by the reparation of private misfortunes through the action of wise and humane laws.

But instead of seconding this great impulse, the man on whom our destinies began to depend arrested it. He preferred to lead us back upon the traces of the Past, and, unhappily for France and for himself, he was but too successful, and too well served in that endeavour.

The First Consul reached Paris on the night of the 12th Messidor (June 30), eighteen days after the battle of Marengo. The political bodies of the State, the magistrates, the administrators, in short, all that Paris contained of men distinguished by office or personal position, hastened to congratulate him, and the crowd filled even the vast apartments of the Tuileries. Adulation, praise, and flattery of all sorts were rife; never before

in France had a conqueror enjoyed so great a triumph.*

Each tried to outdo his fellow in exalting the man whom he had come to adulate, and in finding obsequious and emphatic expression for the public gratitude ; so that the nation, whom these flatterers pretended to represent, seemed to be courting the yoke. Besides, however, the great admiration which so brilliant a victory inspired, it was intolerable that all this rapturous praise should be lavished on the Chief alone, without any mention being made of the army which had so gloriously seconded him.

Amid the torrent of adulation, hardly a word was said of our grief for the blood which the victory had cost us, and for the loss of that brave soldier, General Desaix, called the *Just Sultan* by the Arabs in Egypt, who had fallen on the field of Marengo. In the evening fresh illuminations, more brilliant than before, testified to the public rejoicing.

The First Consul profited very cleverly by the enthusiasm he had inspired, and used to the full, but wisely, the advantage which the suppleness and flexibility of the national character placed in his hand. In the midst of all these demonstrations of

* The reason is obvious ; the General might be praised without any risk of displeasing the Head of the State.

devotion to his person, he was perfectly well aware that the most urgent need of France was peace, and that he owed his power in a great measure to the belief that he alone could obtain that boon, and that he also desired it. He therefore seconded the public aspiration with a great appearance of zeal. Joseph Bonaparte, who was to preside over the negotiations, had set out for Milan immediately on receipt of the news of the first successes of the French army. He, however, arrived too late. The march of events had been so rapid that he could not be commissioned to treat for the armistice after the battle of Marengo. Nevertheless, he remained several days at Milan after the departure of his brother, in expectation of some overtures from Austria. The First Consul had written to the Emperor, reminding him how moderate his conduct had been with respect to the House of Austria, during the preliminaries of Leoben and the peace of Campo-Formio. He proposed either to resume the conditions of the latter treaty, without negotiations, and to adopt them anew, or to name a place of meeting where negotiations for their modification might be entered into. In the event of the Emperor's declining both these proposals, the First Consul declared that he would be forced, in order to carry on the war, to give it another direction, and to continue it only with the view of extending the revolution to Germany.

Austria having deferred her reply to this overture, Joseph Bonaparte had left Milan, and returned to Paris on the 15th Messidor (July 4). Shortly after his return, he, with the Councillors of State Fleurieu and Roederer, received instructions to treat with the three Commissioners from the United States, who had just landed in France, for the negotiation of peace between the two nations. We also learned at this period that an armistice had been signed between General Moreau's army and that of General Kray, and that Count St. Julien had arrived in Paris, with powers from the Emperor to treat with the French Government. Joseph Bonaparte, who was at Morfontaine, was summoned to Paris to conduct the negotiations with the Count.

Everything, in fact, seemed to wear a pacific aspect, and the hope of attaining to the desired end of so many struggles and so much bloodshed had restored general good-humour. But, for my own part, I remained only a very short time under a delusion ; I speedily perceived that the conclusion of peace would be again delayed. Count St. Julien had arrived in Paris, persuaded that peace was so absolutely required in the interests of the First Consul and for the maintenance of his authority, that there were no conditions to which the French Government would not accede in order to obtain it. His surprise was great to find the Government far

otherwise disposed ; not only would Bonaparte in nowise modify the conditions of the Treaty of Campo-Formio, but he was even more exacting. In short, judging from what Joseph Bonaparte said to me in the course of a conversation at Morfontaine on the 12th Thermidor (July 31), I perceived that peace was not desired by the First Consul so strongly as was generally believed ; he was, on the contrary, anxious to persuade France that he desired, rather than in reality to conclude peace. His enterprising genius soared above the present moment. Faithful to the aims he had conceived in Italy, he believed war to be still necessary to him, and ever looking forward to the future, he did not regard himself as having reached the end of the career which the Revolution had opened up to him. " You understand nothing about it," he said to his brother Joseph,* who was speaking to him of the necessity of concluding matters with the American Commissioners ; " you understand nothing about it. In two years' time we shall be masters of the world. If the kings make peace, they are lost ; two years of prosperity to France will destroy their power ; and if they continue the war, they are still more surely lost." And then, colouring his political prophecy with that tinge of superstition which he mingled with

* I quote the exact words repeated to me by Joseph Bonaparte.

everything, he continued: "Nothing has yet happened to me that I have not foreseen; I alone am surprised at nothing that I have accomplished. Even so I can also divine the future, and even so I shall reach the end I propose to myself.*

With dispositions such as these on either side, it was not surprising that the negotiations had at first no result. The Count of St. Julien, having concluded nothing, left Paris towards the middle of the month of Thermidor (the beginning of August) on his return to Vienna. But as Austria, who before entering seriously into negotiations, wished to try the chances of a campaign in Germany, was trying to gain time so as to recover from the reverses she had sustained; and as on the other hand the First

* These fatalistic notions seem to have been shared more or less by all the family. M. Charles Bonaparte, the father, died at Montpellier, in his thirty-seventh year, of a very long-standing chronic disease. Joseph Bonaparte, who was with him in his last moments, often heard him, when partly delirious from pain, asking for his son Napoleon. "Where is he?" he exclaimed repeatedly. "Where is my son Napoleon? He whose sword will make kings tremble! he who will change the face of Europe! He would defend me from my enemies; he would save my life!" Joseph Bonaparte, who told me this anecdote, added, "I am almost ashamed of what I say to you, and certainly I would say it to no one but yourself. But the thing is certain. There exists moreover another witness to this singular fact; Fesch, my mother's brother. He, as well as I, was present at my father's deathbed, and can confirm what I have just told you."

Consul wished to encourage the hope of peace which was so ardently desired by France; the two Powers agreed to open a Congress at Lunéville and to transfer the negotiations thither. Everything was adjourned until the opening of this Congress, which also had to be put off to the beginning of winter.

While the First Consul thus cleverly averted the disgust which would have been created by a sudden renewal of hostilities, and gratified the national feelings by opening negotiations with the American Commissioners, whose progress, although slow, promised a satisfactory issue, he was giving the Government and the Administration a new direction, which, notwithstanding his carefulness to keep the public mind in a state of indecision, revealed his real intentions. Confident, through the enthusiasm he had inspired, and relieved by the death of Kléber, who was assassinated at Cairo on the 24th of June, 1800,* from the

* The First Consul was at Morfontaine, where he was passing a few days in the month of Fructidor, when the news of this event reached him. It was another of Fortune's favours to him, and Joseph admitted that his brother so considered it. Kléber was the personal enemy of Bonaparte; he could not forgive him for having deserted him in Egypt, and as he was highly esteemed in the army, he would have been, had he returned to France, a serious obstacle in the way of the First Consul.

fear of any formidable rival in the army,* he ventured farther than he had hitherto ventured. He appointed Chamberlains for himself, under the name of Prefects of the Palace, and four Ladies of Honour for his wife under a less ambitious designation; thus making a marked distinction between himself and the other two Consuls. The etiquette of the Tuileries became every day more punctilious, and Republican manners gave place by degrees to those of a monarchy. At the same time the First Consul took all possible pains to acquire the exclusive affection of the army, and to accustom it to look to him only as the rewarder of military services. The Institution of "arms of honour" was wonderfully well adapted to this end. As the First Consul conferred them without consultation with his colleagues, and his signature alone appeared on the warrant, the soldiers soon came to look upon him as their only chief, and as the distributor of all the favours to which they could aspire. The conviction that the fortune of soldiers and officers depended solely on him, was the origin of that absolute devotion

* Masséna and Moreau, whose military reputation came next to Bonaparte's, were not in a position to dispute the sovereignty with him. The first was rejected by public opinion for well-known reasons; the second, from weakness of character, let the moment slip when he might by asserting himself have overturned a power which afterwards was too firmly established for such an attempt.

to him which the army displayed, a devotion of which he took every possible advantage. Nor did he omit to gratify the military by every kind of favour which tended to distinguish them from other citizens. The greatest honour was paid to the memory of General Desaix; a public subscription, encouraged by Bonaparte, was opened to defray the cost of a monument, and was responded to as much from a desire to please him as from gratitude for the services of the deceased General. He also took pains to please the army, by causing public honours to be paid to the brave Latour-d'Auvergne, First Grenadier of France, who lost his life on the 9th Thermidor, year VIII. (July 28, 1800), at the battle of Neuburg. But the First Consul also arrogated to himself a more dangerous power, by assuming, together with the right of bestowing favour and honour on the soldiery, that of awarding blame and punishment, a terrible right, which should never be exercised except by a legal tribunal. On the 9th Thermidor, year VII. (July 27, 1799), General Latour-Foissac had surrendered the stronghold of Mantua to the Austrians. Had this capitulation been rendered necessary by the condition of the citadel and the advance of the enemy? This was a question which a military tribunal alone could decide. Bernadotte, at that time Minister, had already summoned a court-martial, and the inculpated General had published

a justificatory statement. But the First Consul, instead of waiting for the decision of the Council, took the initiative, and in a simple letter to the Minister of War pronounced sentence on the General without trial or judgment.

On the other hand, persevering in the system of fusion that he had adopted, he summoned to the most important functions of the State men of the most opposite opinions and political conduct. Thus, on the same day, Barbé-Marbois, who had been banished on the 18th Fructidor, was called to the Council of State; General Jourdan, who having declared himself against the 18th Brumaire, had been excluded from the Council of the Five Hundred, was appointed Minister Extraordinary in Piedmont,† and Bernier, a former member of the Convention, who had voted for the King's death, and was then a Councillor of State, was appointed President of the Council of Prizes of War. In order to complete the political fusion, the laws relating to the *émigrés* were modified, and the amnesty that had been granted to the Vendéans was extended to the neighbouring departments. Lastly, the First Consul being persuaded that much might be gained from the gratitude of

* This letter is in the 'Moniteur' of 6th Thermidor.

† General Jourdan on accepting the appointment made a very noble speech. It may be found in the 'Moniteur' of 12th Thermidor, year VIII.

the clergy, and that he might one day make them useful towards the ends he proposed to himself, took an early opportunity of proving that, far from being the enemy of religious feeling, he was disposed to encourage its revival in France. He wrote therefore to the Prefect of La Vendée to send him twelve of the inhabitants of that department, as he wished to have information respecting them, and if there were any priests who could form part of the deputation, to choose them in preference. "For," added he in this remarkable letter, "I love and esteem priests, who are good Frenchmen, and who know how to defend their country against the eternal enemies of the French name, *those wicked heretics, the English*."* This, the first manifestation of Bonaparte's sentiments in matters of religion, excited a lively interest. It was praised by some as a wise stroke of policy, and blamed by others, who at that time were called Ideologists. But neither insidious praise, nor the clamour of philosophy could stay the First Consul.

A few days later (27th. Thermidor) I heard from Joseph Bonaparte that his brother was engaged in contriving a reconciliation with the Pope. Overtures in that direction had been made through Mgr. Gardoqui, Auditor of the Rota, for

* See this letter in the 'Moniteur' of 8th Thermidor, year VIII.

Spain, and had been well received. It was hoped that they would end in an arrangement, in which a kind of *mezzo termine*, agreeable to both parties, would be taken. Joseph Bonaparte told me at the same time that, in the event of dealings with Rome, he would be appointed to negotiate and to sign the treaty. "It is essential," the First Consul had said to him a few days previously, "it is essential for you to efface the recollection of what you have done against the Papacy, for you are looked upon as its destroyer.* And as you cannot have the troops for your followers, since you did not embrace a military career, and have not shared in their glory, it is important that you should obtain the support of a powerful party. The only one able to counterbalance the influence of the army is composed in France of the priests and the Catholics. Now you will certainly obtain this result by reconciling the French clergy with the Pope."

To these various circumstances which afford some notion of the ideas then occupying the mind of the First Consul, and which he subsequently put into execution, I will add an anecdote relating to the same subject. I had passed the evening of the 3rd Thermidor (July 22) at Bonaparte's house, where

* The First Consul is alluding here to events that took place in Rome on 6th Nivôse, year VI. (December 26, 1797), at which time Joseph Bonaparte was Minister of the French Republic.

I had met the celebrated Laplace. A rather long conversation took place between us three, turning more on scientific subjects than on any other. In the midst of this, the First Consul, struck by some reply or some objection of Laplace's, turned towards him and exclaimed: "But, citizen Laplace, you are an atheist."

While the various impulses thus given to public opinion were keeping men's minds continually on the stretch, fresh rumours of a change in the Constitution arose, and although the First Consul, at a State dinner, which he gave at the Tuileries to celebrate the anniversary of the 14th of July, had proposed a toast to "the anniversary of the 14th of July, and to the French people our sovereign!" everything foreboded that this sovereignty of the people, the base of each succeeding constitution since 1789, was approaching its end. In all his confidential intercourse with the members of the Senate and Tribune, Bonaparte complained that the Constitution did not prescribe any mode of proceeding to the election of a successor to the First Consul. "There is a lacune," he said to Cabanis on the 12th Thermidor, "in the actual social contract which ought to be filled up. If the repose of the State is to be secured, it is indispensable that there should always be a consul-elect. I am the object aimed at by all the Royalists and Jacobins; every

day my life is threatened, and the danger will be greater if I am obliged, on recommencing the war, to put myself again at the head of the army. What in that case would be the fate of France, and how can the evils which would be the inevitable result of such an event be averted?"

Twenty days later (1st Fructidor), while I was walking with him in the gardens of Malmaison, he spoke on the same subject, on the occasion of the law which was then before the Council of State for the regulation of the formation of the lists of eligibles for the various public functions, according to the Constitution of year VIII. The framing of this law presented great difficulties, and the strange device of the 'Notables,' a remnant of Siéyès' plan, appeared to have been introduced into our institutions, only to exhibit the insufficiency of all the methods which were proposed as substitutes for the hereditary principle. The First Consul, however, seemed to be at that time against the hereditary principle, "because," as he said to me, "he regarded it as impossible of establishment without also establishing an intermediate body participating in its advantages, that is, without the revival of a nobility. Such a revival would offend too many opinions, recently formed, and still in their first fervour, for us to be able to attempt it." He wished therefore that for the present "efforts should be restricted to

framing the best law possible on the composition of the lists of notability. If the debate which was to take place at the Tribunate should prove its insufficiency, without substituting a more practicable scheme for it, the impossibility of forming these lists would be demonstrated. And so soon as this truth was recognised, it would seem allowable to have recourse to means foreign to the Constitution in order to supply the want. In that case such an innovation would be called for by public opinion instead of being opposed by it."

This, as any one might have seen, was merely hovering about the difficulty, in order to bring the question constantly back to its real aim; the demonstration of the necessity for the establishment of the hereditary principle. Therefore, in spite of the apparent caution of the First Consul and the scruples he affected, there was little hesitation in promoting what were believed to be his real wishes, and a new Constitution was sketched out, on the bases of heredity, as I have indicated them above only, in order to gain the suffrages of the other two Consuls, that prerogative was extended to their families also. This was a piece of folly, for though the hereditary principle may be admitted in a deliberative body, such as a Chamber of Peers or a Senate, or in a body of nobles, because it transmits merely certain privileges and honorary rights; it can only exist, as

regards the executive power, in the person of one single magistrate, he who is at the head of the Government; and it is for this reason that the heredity of the executive power of necessity constitutes monarchy. Lastly, the divorce of Bonaparte, and his marriage with one of several princesses who were named, was already spoken of. An infanta of Spain was at first proposed as a bride for the First Consul, but as he replied to Volney, who was jesting with him about that alliance, "If I were thinking of marrying a second time, I should not seek a wife in a house that is falling into ruin." This scheme was abandoned, and a German princess was mentioned. It was observed also that at this time the First Consul gathered together a picked corps, consisting of Grenadiers and Chasseurs (Light Infantry), to form the nucleus of a future guard; that he had appointed Junot Commandant of Paris, and given the command of the Artillery to Marmont, two of his most devoted aides-de-camp. Some political intention was supposed to be hidden under these military measures, but I have ascertained this conjecture to be unfounded. His own personal safety was his only motive, and the plots which were successively laid against the life of the First Consul are sufficient proof that these precautions were not unnecessary.

Moreover, even supposing that he desired to precipitate the changes which he subsequently effected,

and which he was too wise to attempt before he had made his peace with the religious party, and gained them over by the re-establishment of the former relations between France and the Pope; supposing this,—he would have had no need of staunch and devoted troops in order to carry them out. The country was anxious to anticipate his sovereign power; he was urged to grasp it. There was a universal infatuation; no honours could be too great for the First Consul, no marks of public gratitude could be excessive. Shortly after his return to Paris, the Commune of St. Cloud petitioned the Tribunate that the palace, the gardens, and the domain of St. Cloud should be placed at the disposal of the First Consul. The Tribunate seemed inclined to grant this petition (which was believed to have been suggested), giving it however the character of a national reward by changing the name of the palace from St. Cloud to Marengo, after the example of that which had been done in England for Marlborough after the battle of Blenheim. But the First Consul, whom I saw the day after the petition had been laid before the Tribunate, was opposed to any concession which should be personal to himself. “Not that I think,” said he, “that this kind of recompense to the generals and magistrates of a great nation should not be introduced into France, but it seems to me that such a gift, which I should look upon as an honour from the nation, can only be

offered me when I shall cease to exercise the functions with which I am now invested. And in truth," he added, "of what use would the gift of St. Cloud be to me at this moment, and how could I have the deed of gift drawn up, since it could only be effected by passing a law, and every proposition of a new law is attributed exclusively to me by the Constitution. Therefore all that can be done is in a general way to place St. Cloud at the disposal of the Government." This took place shortly afterwards. But the petition and the sensation produced by it, and the manner in which ideas which were so completely alien to the Republican principles hitherto loudly professed were received, were sufficient indications of the unspoken tendencies of men's minds. Not only *interested* friends of the First Consul were impelling him towards the sovereign power (his true friends and those of France were very far from doing so), but his most dangerous enemies, the partisans of the former dynasty, were also pressing him in the same direction, for they were convinced that if monarchy were but established, they would only have to drive away the parvenu monarch, or, if he could not be thus disposed of, to await his death, in order to give back the throne he had reared again to its former possessors.

Thus in the same way that ten years previously the impulse given to society carried it headlong

towards the destruction of all our ancient institutions, and a universal demand for change and innovation prevailed in every quarter, so, in 1800, all those who exercised any influence over the nation, tended to make it retrace its steps, and what had been of old was now held up as a model for that which ought to be. Nothing was good but the Past, and as a prelude to its restoration in the forms of government, every former custom was adopted that did not too openly offend against the habits which had been contracted during the course of the Revolution.

Cambacérès and Talleyrand, two persons who began at this time to exercise a great ascendancy over the First Consul, because they flattered his inclinations, now entered heartily into his plans, and smoothed the path which he desired to take. Cambacérès made himself answerable for the former members of the Legislative Assembly, and for the magistracy, which by favours and gifts of places in the Government and on the Bench, he trained to retrogression towards the Past; and if a few acceded unwillingly or even refused to be bribed, the greater number forsook without difficulty the principles they had hitherto professed, for the sake of honour and wealth. Talleyrand undertook to bring the nobility to the feet of their new Master, and found his task less difficult than did Cambacérès. Madame Bonaparte's receptions were crowded with nobles

and returned *émigrés*. No favour offered by Bonaparte was refused, no employment was disdained, and these gentlemen seemed only to be waiting for the First Consul to ascend the throne in order to resume their own titles and their former functions at the Court of our kings.

Seconded on both sides by this double influence of two such opposite parties, the First Consul maintained his own equilibrium between them, without allowing either to encroach upon the other for a moment. He advanced with increased confidence towards his aim; yet he never neglected the public business, but worked at it with indefatigable ardour. No one had ever so assiduously endeavoured to establish the Administration on such a solid basis as that which he gave to it, and which is still the groundwork, not only of the Administration existing to this day in France, but also of those in other countries which have adopted his system. He enforced the strictest order in the management of the public funds, and if he was at first obliged to shut his eyes to the extortions of Talleyrand, Lucien Bonaparte, Bourrienne, and the rascally subordinates who served under them, he was not unaware of their existence, he repressed them by degrees, and even punished them.

Such was the state of France at the close of year VIII. (September 1800). In the course of

that eventful year, the nation had risen from her ruins and reappeared in all her glory on the stage of the world. Abroad, she was regarded with mingled fear and admiration. Europe already felt that her destiny would depend on that of France, and that the destiny of France hung on the extraordinary man who had placed himself at her head. This man, therefore, became the one sole object of every plot and every conspiracy. To beat France on the field of battle was no longer the question; there were too many adverse chances, and the struggle was too formidable; but the destruction of the man who ruled her would once more deliver her up to a state of anarchy which must complete her ruin.

I had watched the course of events closely, and the consequences that I have just deduced from them were clear to my perception. The friendship and confidence of Joseph Bonaparte, my conversations with the First Consul, who was still occasionally accessible to me on account of our former intimacy in Italy, had initiated me into certain secrets, and had enabled me to detect certain hidden meanings unknown to others. Yet I had no place in the Government up to the end of year VIII., and, as a Member of the Tribune, I was opposed to, rather than associated with, its acts.

My position was about to undergo a change. On

the fifth complementary day of that year (September 22), I received a note from Cambacérès, asking me to call on him at eight o'clock in the evening. I went. He had been desired by the First Consul to inform me of his intention to summon me to the Council of State on the 1st Vendémiaire, and to ask whether this appointment would meet my views.

The new functions which were offered to me were more in accordance with my tastes and habits than those I should have to relinquish. I accepted with eagerness.

Five other Councillors of State were appointed at the same time as I. General Gouvion-St.-Cyr to the War Section; Portalis and Thibandau to the Section of Legislation; François de Nautes and Shee, like myself, to the Section of the Interior.

The promotion of citizens chosen from such widely differing parties was dictated by the system of fusion to which the First Consul at that time adhered in all his appointments, with the purpose which I have already explained.

CHAPTER XI.

A Treaty of Peace with the United States is signed—Incident connected with the date of that Treaty—The active part taken by the First Consul in the deliberations of the Council of State—The proposed law on the formation of lists of Eligibles is abandoned—The Republican conspiracy of Ceraochi and its consequences—Reform of the laws on Emigration—Letter from Louis XVIII. to the First Consul—Arrival of Count von Cobentzel to negotiate for peace—Rudeness of the First Consul to that Minister, who leaves Paris on his way to Lunéville—Dissensions between the First Consul and his brother Lucien—Violent dispute between the latter and Fouché—Lucien is removed from the Ministry of the Interior and appointed Ambassador to Madrid—The Author is selected for a second Mission to Corsica—Opinions expressed by the First Consul during the debates of the Council of State.

THE ninth year of the Republic began auspiciously. The armistice with Austria had been prolonged for forty-five days; peace with the Americans had been signed on the 4th Vendémiaire (September 26, 1800); the Congress at Lunéville was about to open; the Russian Minister at Berlin had been directed to treat with our Minister, General Bour-

nonville, and the Czar, Paul I., had become infatuated with Bonaparte, of whom he spoke with the wildest enthusiasm ; all these things contributed to strengthen the hope of a near and general peace. The fête at Morfontaine, in honour of the conclusion of the Treaty of Peace with the United States, was consequently most brilliant and animated. I was present, as were also the American Commissioners, the Consuls, the Ministers, and a considerable number of Generals, Tribunes, and members of the Legislative Body. Among other persons of note who had received invitations was General La Fayette, and the compliment paid to that famous citizen was universally approved.

An incident occurred connected with the conclusion of peace which will not, I think, be out of place in this narrative.

The treaty had really been signed at Morfontaine, where the conferences had been held and where they terminated ; and Joseph Bonaparte greatly regretted that the Act should bear the date of Paris instead of that of Morfontaine. He was attached to the place, which would thus have acquired a kind of historical celebrity. He spoke of his disappointment to me, and as, after a few minutes' consideration, we came to the conclusion that there would probably still be time to effect the desired alteration, I undertook to be the bearer of the

proposal to Talleyrand. An express despatched by that Minister to Havre might easily arrive there before the embarkation of the American Commissioners, and by means of a letter from Mr. Murray, the United States Minister in Paris, who had negotiated the treaty, the change of date might be made on the copy which they were to take back with them.

I saw Talleyrand on the 13th Vendémiaire (October 5) at Auteuil, and, at first, he seemed quite disposed to fall in with the plan; but I afterwards had reason to believe that his acquiescence was not quite sincere. We agreed to meet on the following day, and I accompanied him to the Tuileries. He went in to see the First Consul, and I waited for him in a drawing-room. I had scarcely been there five minutes, when Bonaparte, opening the door of his private room himself, called me in. The conversation was animated, he said that his brother had missed his opportunity, and that opportunities when missed did not recur; then he took a higher flight, and said that missed opportunities were the cause of great revolutions, and of the overthrow of empires; that it would have been very easy to have had the thing done, as his brother wished it, at the time of signing the treaty, but that now he would never consent to the proposed proceeding. I tried in vain to alter his decision,

and Talleyrand supported me, although feebly. The First Consul, however, took umbrage at the mediation of his Minister in an affair which he might have arranged himself had he sincerely desired it, and, turning sharply to him, he said, "Why did you come and consult me about it? You should have done it without asking, and afterwards I should have thought it quite right." Talleyrand stammered out that he had told him, because it was necessary to tell him everything, but that there were certain things that he might know without being supposed to know them, and this one was of the number. Notwithstanding all this fencing, I soon perceived there was nothing to be done, and I withdrew. Talleyrand was more than civil to me on our way back, he tried very hard to persuade me that in the step I had just taken the First Consul could only see a proof of my affection for his brother, and that, in reality, he must feel pleased at it. We parted, and I returned to Morfontaine. I have narrated this anecdote, not very interesting in itself, only because it was a revelation to me of a trait in the character of Bonaparte. From his own words I perceived the great importance which, according to the maxim of one of the sages of Greece,* he attached to knowing how to seize Opportunity; a

* Pittacus; his motto was *χαρὸν γνῶθι, occasionem nosce*. The King of Prussia called Opportunity "the mother of great events."

doctrine that during the most brilliant period of his career generally guided his conduct with great advantage.

On returning to Paris, whither I was called by my new duties, I was assiduous in my attendance at the sittings of the Council of State. I was also present at various Councils of Administration, to which the First Consul summoned me, and which were sometimes prolonged to a late hour at night. No branch of the government was unfamiliar to him, and he entered into the minutest details with wonderful sagacity.

The Council of State was particularly occupied at this time in framing a law for the formation of the lists of eligibles, who by the terms of the Constitution were to furnish the candidates for the various public offices, and even for the renewable consulships. But the deeper we plunged into this discussion, the less could we see our way. Roederer and I were jointly charged with the task, and we had contrived and framed a project of law; but we were well aware that the difficulties of its execution would be serious. I read it aloud to the Council of State. It was printed, and each member studied it; but, either I had not succeeded in expressing my own and my colleague's ideas clearly, or the executive details appeared impracticable, or—as I can readily believe—our difficulties were purposely multiplied

so as to lead to the abandonment of a scheme which did not suit the views of the First Consul; at any rate, it was ultimately given up. Although the plan was at first adopted, as Bonaparte had not given it his approval, it was sent back for examination to the Sections of the Interior and of Legislation, so that they might either amend our project or propose another. But the subject was threadbare, time went by, and subsequent events caused the projected law to be lost sight of; it perished still-born.

The power of the First Consul was increasing through a concurrence of circumstances produced by his own genius, and which he contrived to turn to the advantage of the nation, by the order that he introduced into every branch of the government, and to his own, by making himself the sole source of benefits or rewards. But his enemies were also increasing in number, and being more than ever persuaded that by striking down this one man they could overturn the Government, they were secretly sharpening the daggers with which they hoped to strike him.

The extreme Republicans and the partisans of the former dynasty, united by a common interest, without maintaining any mutual relations, were hatching the same plots, and seemed only to be disputing who should strike the first blow.

The Republicans did the deed. A few enthu-

siasts formed a plot to assassinate the First Consul at the Opera. The particulars of the conspiracy, which was discovered, and those of the trial and condemnation of its authors, are to be found in the writings of the period, and especially in a pamphlet entitled, "*Procès instruit par le tribunal criminel contre Demerville, Ceracchi et autres accusés.*" I shall confine myself, therefore, to narrating some few details of the event which came to my knowledge in course of time.

The conspirators, nine in number, desired, before putting their plan into execution, to add four to their association. They proposed to a retired soldier to join them, believing they could rely on him. He feigned consent, and introduced three other malcontents who were but spies in the pay of the police, and the execution of the plot was fixed for the 13th Vendémiaire (October 10). The conspirators, armed with carbines, pistols and poniards, were to surround the First Consul as he entered his carriage after the Opera; to kill him, to set fire to the theatre, distribute innumerable copies of a proclamation drawn up in the name of an Insurrectionary Committee, and accomplish another revolution in the Government.

Bonaparte was informed of these details early in the day. He summoned the other two Consuls and held a conference with them. It was resolved, against their advice, that the First Consul should go

to the Opera as he had originally intended.* On this the other two Consuls resolved to accompany him thither. The Guards were doubled, and during the performance, which passed off very quietly, one of the principal actors in the plot, Ceracchi, a Roman by birth and a celebrated sculptor, was arrested, together with one or two other conspirators.

Ceracchi confessed everything on being examined by the Minister of Police. He admitted the conspiracy, and said that it was his intention to have assassinated Bonaparte, whom he abhorred as the oppressor of his country; in short, his replies revealed an extraordinary state of excitement, and a fanaticism approaching to insanity. He named Barrère's Secretary as having distributed arms and money to the conspirators. Each of them had received a pair of pistols, a dagger, and twenty louis in gold; and in fact, arms and gold were found, as Ceracchi had said, on those who were arrested. He added that he was not to strike the blow himself, but he was recognised as their chief by the conspirators, and he had placed himself above the First Consul's box to give the signal. He was perplexed at the non-appearance of the others, came down, and was arrested on the staircase.†

* 'Les Horaces' was to be performed for the first time.

† I had not been personally acquainted with Ceracchi during my residence in Italy, but I had often heard of him. His talent for sculpture was very remarkable.

Police officers were despatched to Barrère's house to arrest his Secretary, but he was not there; he had gone into the country two days before, and it was resolved, though unwillingly on the part of Bonaparte, that Barrère himself should be arrested. This decision was come to in consequence of Barrère's singular conduct on the preceding day. He had gone to Junot, to warn him that a plot was being hatched against the life of the First Consul, and that precautions should be taken; but he had not explained himself further.

After the event, this half confidence was thought to be a clever way of sheltering himself from suspicion, if the plan did not succeed, since he had not said enough to ensure its failure. It was believed, therefore, at first, that Barrère was well aware of the conspiracy, but the arrest of his former secretary, named Demerville, of Joseph Arena,* and of Topius-Lebrun,† which took place a few days afterwards, dispelled every suspicion that had been entertained against Barrère, and he was immediately set at liberty. Many persons of note were compromised likewise, and in particular several Italian refugees, among them the Duke de Bonnelli and the

* He was a Corsican and a personal enemy of Bonaparte. I had met him in Corsica. He was a man of ability, of very active mind, and had much decision of character.

† A painter, pupil of David. He had been one of the jury of the Revolutionary Tribunal under Robespierre.

Prince de Santa-Croce. Madame Visconti, whose house was a place of meeting for all Italians, received, notwithstanding her intimate friendship with Berthier, an order to leave Paris. It had been remarked that on the day appointed for the execution of the conspiracy she had gone to the Opera, escorted by Salicetti,* who had excused himself on some trifling pretext from dining that evening with Joseph Bonaparte. Carnot's resignation of the post of War Minister, which he sent in two days before the date on which the life of the First Consul was threatened, likewise gave rise to comments, which the well-known character of that General should have sufficed to prevent. But all these suspicions were dispelled by the light which was thrown on the conspiracy by the 'instruction' in the case.† Only those who were really guilty were prosecuted, and after prolonged proceedings, lasting over three months, their heads fell on the scaffold.

The results of this conspiracy were, as always happens in similar cases, rather favourable than injurious to the authority of the First Consul, and they contributed to confirm his power. The Council

* Salicetti was very intimate with Joseph Arena.

† Bonaparte hesitated for some time before he gave orders for the drawing up of the instruction against the conspirators. He feared the publicity of the defence and even the confessions of the accused, who prided themselves on their attempt, and proclaimed themselves the avengers of oppressed liberty.

of State went in a body to the Tuileries to express their sympathy with the head of the Government in the danger he had just escaped. The Tribune followed their example, and anticipated the propositions that might be made to it concerning the precautions to be taken against a repetition of this attempt. It was, in fact, at this period that the functions of the Prefect of Police in Paris were extended beyond the limits of the capital, and to the Commune of St. Cloud in particular, and that the action of the police, who had given proofs of ability, fidelity, and activity on the occasion, acquired greater importance, and became one of the most powerful auxiliaries of the Government. It was at this period also that Fouché gained the entire confidence of the First Consul, and began to exercise an influence over him from which Bonaparte could never entirely free himself, notwithstanding the numerous proofs which he had of faithlessness and treachery.

The plot of Ceracchi and his accomplices, who all belonged to the extreme revolutionary class, contributed to convince the First Consul that his greatest and most dangerous enemies were to be found in that party; and that consequently he should arm himself chiefly against the remaining Jacobins and Terrorists. The *émigrés* and partisans of the former dynasty ceased to be formidable in his eyes,

and he thought he should gain them entirely to himself by relaxing the rigour of the laws against emigration in their favour. With this view he proposed for discussion in the Council of State the celebrated decree of the 28th Vendémiaire, year IX. (Oct. 20, 1800), whose effect was the reversal of all the former terrible legislation existing since 1793, that had been the cause of so much individual wrong and suffering. The new decrees, which met with no serious opposition in the debates of the Council of State, proved that the Government, while performing this act of justice from motives of moderation and equity, was entirely convinced that in throwing open the gates of France to the *émigrés*, it was not opening them to enemies. Apart from the confidence inspired by gratitude on which he reckoned, nothing could be more adapted to confirm the First Consul's views than a curious circumstance which I shall now relate, and which, if true, as I have every reason to believe it was, must have decided Bonaparte's line of action towards the *émigrés*. I wrote it down as follows, on the very day on which Girardin and I heard it from Joseph Bonaparte.

One confidence had led to another, and lastly Joseph Bonaparte revealed a very singular circumstance. "About three months ago," said he, "the First Consul received from the Pretender (Louis XVIII.) a letter of four pages, written entirely

in his own hand. It contains a kind of renunciation of the throne; but at the same time calls upon Bonaparte to consider whether, since he has been so great a benefactor to France, it would not be consonant with his greatness, his generosity, nay even his humanity, to recall the true heir of this ancient monarchy to the sovereign power, by securing to him the position that would become vacant on the death of the present Head of the Government. The letter also contains warm praise of our First Magistrate, and states that commands have been laid on all Royalists dwelling on French soil, to remain perfectly quiescent, and neither to plan nor attempt anything against the existing Government."

Our informant had seen this letter, but it was not in his possession. I did not therefore see it myself; but I can affirm that if this statement be untrue, the falsehood cannot be laid to the charge of Joseph Bonaparte. After the temporary disturbance caused by the conspiracy which had just failed, public business was resumed with more activity than ever. The sittings of the Council of State became increasingly interesting from the various discussions that took place on different branches of the Administration. Amid the general activity, I too found myself busier than I had hitherto been. The First Consul appointed me one of the Assistant Reporters of the Councillor of State charged with the

National Domains, and in that capacity I was enabled to get justice done in the cases of several citizens who had been deprived of their property by the misapplication of the emigration laws. Shortly afterwards, I and five of my colleagues were employed in making eliminations from the lists of *émigrés*, in virtue of the decree of the 28th Vendémiaire.

“The arrival of the Austrian Minister, Count von Cobentzel, at the Congress of Lunéville was made known in the beginning of Brumaire (end of October), and added to the general satisfaction afforded by the recent acts of the Government. So soon as Joseph Bonaparte was informed that the Austrian negotiator was on his way, he set out to join him at Lunéville. But he met him on the road, going to Paris, without having stopped at Lunéville. The two Ministers entered the same carriage, and Joseph Bonaparte, retracing his steps, returned to Paris with Count von Cobentzel. They arrived on the 8th Brumaire (October 30). This friendly proceeding and the confidence that seemed to be already established between the two negotiators were apparently good omens for the issue of the conference. But I was speedily undeceived by a few words from Joseph Bonaparte. Count von Cobentzel had come without any positive authorisation from his Court, and it was only the fact that M. de Lucchesini, the Russian Minister, had come

direct to Paris without stopping at Lunéville, that had induced him to come there also. And moreover, although he had been received with cordiality which excited M. de Lucchesini's jealousy, he promptly repented of his journey to Paris, which had been undertaken in ignorance of the invasion of Tuscany by the French troops. He learned the fact in Paris; and his presence there became embarrassing in consequence. In reality affairs were not so advanced as it was hoped, and as the First Consul wished us to believe. Count von Cobentzel made a formal announcement that he had only powers to treat in common with England; to this Joseph Bonaparte replied that he had none on his side except to treat separately, and that he must decline all communication with Sir Thomas Grenville, who had been designated by the English Government, unless a naval armistice were concluded, as a necessary preliminary to the admission of the English negotiator. The question was further complicated by the intervention of M. de Lucchesini, speaking for the Cabinet of St. Petersburg, which insisted strongly on the integral restoration of the King of Sardinia. It was feared that the resolution of Paul I. on this point would hinder the progress of the negotiations. Bonaparte having already disposed, so to speak, of Piedmont,* could not undo

* By a decree of the 30th Fructidor, year VIII. (Sept. 17, 1800)

what had been so recently effected, and would only hold out some hope of an indemnity in Italy for the King of Sardinia. This was a difficult expedient, and one which must be impracticable, so long as the Cisalpine Republic, which had been restored after the victory of Marengo, should be in existence. Those, therefore, who were at all in the secrets of the Government foresaw a renewal of hostilities, and were convinced that the Lunéville negotiations could make no progress until the issue of the campaign about to be opened should be decided in favour of either France or Austria.

Count von Cobentzel did not prolong his stay in Paris beyond a few days. He set out for Lunéville on the 18th Brumaire (November 4), and Joseph Bonaparte started on the same day for the same destination. This resolution was arrived at after a discussion, held in Joseph Bonaparte's presence, between the First Consul and Count von Cobentzel, and during which the negotiation was nearly broken off. The principal difficulty had arisen from Count von Cobentzel's formal refusal to treat without the

the First Consul had annexed all that portion of Piedmont which was situated beyond the Sesia to the Cisalpine Republic. He had not pronounced on the fate of the rest of the country, but it was evident that he would never consent to restore it to its former rulers.

concurrence of England, while France, on the contrary, insisted on treating separately. The First Consul was very impatient during this interview. "If you have nothing more to say," he exclaimed, addressing Count von Cobentzel, "you may return as quickly as you came."

It appeared, moreover, that the Count had more extended powers than he admitted, since at Lunéville he consented to open negotiations without the concurrence of England. It is true, however, that they proceeded very slowly at first.

On the evening of the day on which this interview had taken place I saw Madame Bonaparte. She, like myself, felt but little confidence in the success of the negotiations, and she told me that Count von Cobentzel had written to her, complaining of the manner in which he had been treated by the First Consul. What could she do in the matter?

While Bonaparte was assuming that haughty attitude towards the foreign Powers, which for a long time was tolerated, on account of his greatness and glory, by Kings who had become his flatterers, internal discussions in his family were leading up to the scandalous quarrels which subsequently took place between the brothers, and produced such disastrous results.

A pamphlet published in the beginning of Brumaire, under the title of "Parallèle entre César,

Cromwell, Monk et Bonaparte," and which was very widely circulated, had made a great sensation. It was not easy to detect the aim of the author at first; in fact, it was only on carefully studying it to the end that its meaning became apparent, and the reader perceived that France was warned of the risk she was running by giving up the inheritance of Bonaparte to the Generals and the military. The writer did not, however, point out the precise remedy for this evil, but it was evident that his principal object was to indicate one of the First Consul's brothers. The style, the affectation of the antitheses, and especially the exclamation on page 14, "Where is he, the successor to Pericles?" caused the authorship of this pamphlet to be attributed to Lucien Bonaparte.*

Popular feeling was not yet sufficiently favourable to the views it put forth to receive it well. It attacked the military, whom it was the First Consul's interest to conciliate, and even supposing that in his heart he did not dislike that publication, since it tended to familiarise the people with certain

* In four days this pamphlet went through two editions. In the first were these words, page 16: "You may fall once more under the dominion of foreigners, *under the yoke of S . . .*," an abbreviation which was interpreted as meaning Siéyès. In the second edition the abbreviation had disappeared, and was replaced by the words "*Under the yoke of the military,*" which gave rise to the belief that in the first the phrase should have been read "*Under the yoke of soldiers.*"

words, which until recently would have greatly offended them, he yet thought it advisable to express dissatisfaction. "It was a work," he said to Roederer, "of which he himself had suggested the idea, but whose concluding pages were written by a madman." *

This circumstance, added to the universal complaints of Lucien Bonaparte's administration, made the First Consul decide on removing his brother from the Ministry of the Interior, and sending him out of France. He was despatched to Spain as Ambassador Extraordinary under the pretext of important interests to be treated of with that Power. There was, however, nothing to justify the belief that the political relations between the two States were of sufficient gravity to require such a measure, and in fact Lucien's mission served only to enable him to acquire immense wealth, which he wrung from the weakness and pusillanimity of the Queen of Spain and her favourite Don Manuel Godoy, to whom he sold Peace. No one was deceived about the real motive for this measure. On the day that it became public (16th Brumaire) I heard that it had been adopted in consequence of an angry altercation between

* It is certain that Bonaparte frequently said, "If I were to die quietly in my bed, with time to make my will, I would advise the French nation not to choose a soldier for my successor."

Lucien Bonaparte and Fouché, in the presence of the First Consul. Fouché reproached Lucien with his conduct, his extortions, his immoral way of life, his orgies with actresses, among others, Mademoiselle Mezerai. Lucien retaliated on Fouché with his revolutionary doings, the bloodshed of which he had been the cause, the tax he had imposed on the gaming tables, and the money he made by it. After thus mutually rendering justice to each other, they came to abuse, and the history of the pamphlet played a great part in the quarrel. The First Consul took no share in this scandalous scene, which occurred on the 12th Brumaire (Nov. 3). During the whole of it he remained absolutely silent, and the antagonists were dismissed, ignorant which of the two had prevailed. But Fouché, well knowing he had gone too far in the game to allow his adversary the upper hand, by which he would be utterly ruined, resorted to a new expedient. He worked, or caused others to work, on General Moreau, who was on the point of taking the command of the armies of the Rhine and the Danube. He made him feel that on him, as a General equally illustrious by his victories and honourable in his character, the task devolved of telling the whole truth to the First Consul, and inducing him to sacrifice his brother. Moreau consented to this step. He represented to Bonaparte the discontent of the

army, his fear of being unable to cope with it, the bad effect that had been produced by a publication in which the military were openly insulted, and the probability that the First Consul himself would be believed to give it a tacit approval, if he abstained from punishing the author.

Immediately after this conference Lucien's departure was determined on. He was succeeded at the Ministry of the Interior by Chaptal. Madame Bacciochi told me that she had used her best endeavours with her brother to persuade him to select me; but this step, which was taken without my knowledge, resulted in nothing. The First Consul intended me at that time for a very different mission, one which I could not look upon as a favour, although it was bestowed on me as a mark of confidence.

On the 22nd Brumaire I was passing the evening at the First Consul's house. He took me aside, and after a long conversation, he proposed that I should return to Corsica. His intention, he said, was to suspend the authority of the Constitution in that island, and to entrust me with the government during its suspension. No mission could be less agreeable to me, and yet it was not in my power to decline it. I ventured to raise some objections on the score of my insufficiency to confront the difficulties of the task, but they were not admitted, and

I perceived that I should not escape from my destination unless some unexpected event, which might alter the decision of the First Consul, should occur. This hope was not realised.

Meanwhile the conference had been opened at Lunéville, and dragged slowly along, making no real progress. Girardin, who had been on a visit for some days with Joseph Bonaparte, returned to Paris at the end of February, and from what he told us we lost all hope of peace. Every preparation was therefore made for war; there was even some question of Bonaparte's departure for the German Army. But he soon abandoned this intention, and although General Moreau, who had repented of his share in the 18th Brumaire, was on the coldest terms with the First Consul, it was on him that the choice of the Government fell.

Public opinion had anticipated that choice. In the midst of this state of expectation and suspense the Session of the Legislative Body was about to open.* The Council of State was actively employed in the preparation of the laws that were to be presented in the course of the Session, and as the First Consul was always present at its sittings, the debates were rendered highly interesting, because the share he bore in them, and the opinions which he put forward. I will mention some of these, which

* The opening was fixed for the 1st Frimaire (Nov. 22).

struck me particularly, either by their singularity or by their disclosure of his secret views.

In the sitting of the 27th Brumaire (Nov. 18) the reports of the various Ministers on the state of their department were given in. These reports were to serve as a basis to the exposition of the general state of the Republic, which the Government intended to have read on the approaching opening of the Legislative Session.* The Minister of the Navy had inserted in his report a commendation of the conduct of the inhabitants of the Ile de France (Mauritius), and of the Ile de la Réunion (Bourbon), who, amid so many political storms, had remained faithful to the metropolis. In concluding his panegyric, he added that it was a duty to indemnify the inhabitants of these islands for the reproaches which the "prejudices" of the former Government (the Directory) had often caused to be addressed to them.† The word "prejudices" gave offence to Truguet.‡ He rose to speak, not only in defence

* This exposition, very well drawn up by Consul Lebrun, was published in the 'Moniteur' of the 2nd Frimaire, year IX.

† The inhabitants of the Isles of France and Bourbon had refused to receive the Commissioners sent them by the Directory, and also refused to adopt the legislation which gave freedom to the negroes. The two colonies were thenceforth regarded as in a state of counter-revolution.

‡ Admiral Truguet, at that time a Councillor of State, one of the most violent demagogues of the Revolution.

of the Executive Directory, which he said had governed our colonies in a truly Republican spirit, but in censure of the inhabitants of the two islands, who, he asserted, deserved no praise; and he declared himself plainly for the suppression of the paragraph. Barbé-Marbois,* warmly supported it, and maintained that by refusing admittance to the Commissioners who had been sent to them by the preceding Government, the inhabitants of the Isles of France and of Réunion had simply preserved themselves from the misfortune which had fallen upon the rest of our colonies. Truguet replied with some heat, and the discussion was degenerating into personalities when the First Consul began to speak.

He highly praised the conduct of the inhabitants; he protested that, for his part, he thought nothing more absurd than a system of general philanthropy, which, under pretext of bestowing liberty on a class of men of a different colour from ourselves, had in fact made them masters of the small number of whites against whom, it was clear, they would take up arms on receiving so fatal a gift. He said that between the sad alternative of being slaves or owning slaves, there could be no hesitation, and that it must always be better to be the masters. He quoted the army of the East; he certainly knew of no troops more loyal

* A Councillor of State, very much devoted to the First Consul, but with a strong leaning towards Royalism.

than they, but if they were asked to-morrow to free the slaves who inhabited the country they now occupied, they would begin by hanging those who brought them such a proposition, and they would do well.

He was not acquainted, he continued, with the slaves of America and the Indies, but he had seen those of Egypt, of the Desert of Darfour, of the bank of the Euphrates, and of the Red Sea, and among them all he had seen but brute beasts whose heads were cut off at a sign from the Pacha or the police-officer, and that he himself had felt the indispensable necessity of retaining as a measure of police a custom from which he had at first revolted. He ended his discourse with general reflections on Revolutions and on the danger of taking the various epochs which have marked them as a stand-point, instead of taking the dominant events which were consented to by all: "Think you," he said, addressing himself to the whole Council, "think you that the 18th Fructidor, the 18th Brumaire, even the 10th August were quite in order, and obtained the consent of all men; that you wish to place the Institutions to which those days gave birth, above other institutions which have been consecrated by time and custom? We have finished the Romance of the Revolution, we must now begin its History, only seeking for what is real and practicable in the application of its principles, and

not what is speculative and hypothetical. To follow any other course at the present day would be to philosophize and not to govern."

Circumstances which occurred shortly afterwards gave Bonaparte further opportunities of expressing noteworthy opinions. On the whole, the Legislative Body and the Tribune had been actuated since the opening of the Session by a hostile disposition towards the Government, and had taken every opportunity of displaying it. The Tribune especially was punctiliously severe upon the slightest errors in the projects of law, and in the debates that were held in the presence of the Legislative Body its orators often had the advantage over those of the Council of State. The Government was even obliged to withdraw some of its projects; among others the proposed laws concerning the Magistrates and the Municipal Police. In the sitting of the Council on the 14th Frimaire (December 5) the First Consul complained of the negligence with which those projects had been drawn up. He said it was incredible that errors so grave as those which the documents in question contained should have escaped the notice of the Members of the Section of Legislation and the sagacity of the thirty Councillors of State, and that for his part he would not have remained a member of the Section of Legislation, after such a fault. Then turning towards Regnault de St.-Jean-d'Angely,

he reproached him with his weak defence of a law on the preceding day.* “You admitted,” said he, “that this law was imperfect. That is an admission you must never make. You invoked the union of powers, you preached the doctrine of reconciliation and of goodwill. Miserable means! especially in circumstances so trivial. An orator is always beaten, when he thinks himself obliged to have recourse to such feeble expedients as these.”

“Moreover,” he continued, “the disposition of the Tribunate, and of the Legislative Body, is evident. These are bodies who, being uncertain of what they really are, act according to the natural tendency of governing bodies, to assert their importance and make people talk of them. They are the great nobles, the blue-ribbon-wearers of the Revolution of 1793; they cannot forgive a state of things which has taken from them that power, and those honours which they are always regretting. Public opinion must pronounce between them and us. If it ever decides for them, we could do nothing, and must renounce our rule. But if this same public recognises that the Government is also the representative of the people, if it sees that the struggle now commencing is the result only of wounded vanity, or of ill-effaced regrets and recollections, then it is they who will cease to be anything.

“From all this,” continued the First Consul, “it

follows that our line must be to make as few laws as possible, and to do without all that are not indispensable. For in the present state of feeling I see nothing that can reasonably be proposed with a certainty of success. We must confine ourselves to the law on the Budget, and be silent respecting all the rest. Some day perhaps the people, who are represented by us as well as by the Legislative Body and the Tribunate, will perceive that it is impossible to rule a State when this diversity exists between the principal governing bodies, and especially when the two authorities that vote the laws insist that none but perfect and irreproachable laws shall be presented to them ; which is a vain dream, quite impossible to realise."

Two days after this sitting, at the conclusion of an audience given to the Ambassadors,* he detained the Members of the Council of State, and returning to the same subject, expressed similar ideas. He made the additional remark that the Tribunate lost much of the advantage conferred on it by the Constitution by regarding itself as instituted merely to oppose the Government, and not to advise with it ; thus posing as the natural enemy of the Government, instead of an integral part of it, and, as it were, its mouthpiece,

* For some time past these audiences had been given with great ceremony ; the Senate and the State Council being present at them.

for the tribune is the principal and easiest mode of addressing the public, and leading public opinion in the desired direction for the preservation of the existing order of things. "It is impossible," continued he, "that there should be any likeness between the present order, and that which existed under the Constituent Assembly. The new power that was then arising had to struggle with a power that was crumbling, and which marked regretfully its own daily diminution. To-day, on the contrary, it is a dethroned power, and one without strength of its own, that would attempt to act against a vigorous power able to dispense with its help. We have sufficient laws to govern the Republic for a long time yet, without having recourse to the Legislative Body, and we can do without it until the time when it will have been sifted by the renewals which the Senate has to make in it occasionally, dating from the present year. What will be the consequence, moreover, of the inaction in which we shall leave it? For another year, it will be said that the Government intends to abolish the Tribunate, an intention which it has not, and cannot have. But although such rumours may bring discredit on that Body and deprive it of some consideration, which is not desirable, it is better to run the risk of this than to have to fight the English, the Austrians, the Russians, the Legislature, and the Tribunate at the same time.

These are too many enemies for the Government, and it must endeavour to lessen their number."

He spoke next of the excitement that had been caused by a recent occurrence. The Constitutional Bishop of Morbihan had been murdered by fanatics between Quimper and Morlaix, in the month of Brumaire, and this murder furnished a text for declamation and invective against the restored *émigrés*, the clergy, and consequently against the Government, which had encouraged the return of the first and the pretensions of the second. A motion was already prepared by the Tribunate, which was to be read by Boujoux, one of its members, containing a hostile criticism of the Government, and openly blaming its action and its policy. This motion was to have been made some days before, on the 9th Frimaire, and the fear of being premature and imprudent had been the sole cause of the delay in reading it.

After informing us of these particulars, the First Consul continued: "They want me, in order to avenge the assassination of a priest, to proscribe a whole class of society, to commence a course of severe and revolutionary measures. I will not do so; I only wish for law, which ought to be sufficient for the repression and punishment of every crime. My own life was attempted, but it never occurred to me, nor was I asked, to proscribe all the Jacobins among

whom the crime had been plotted. I left its punishment to the ordinary tribunals; and I shall do the same with the assassins of Andrein, with this difference, that they shall be prosecuted with much greater severity than those who attacked myself." I shall bring these quotations to a close here, although at that time I took note of many other things. I have said enough to explain the principles on which the First Consul acted in the management of public affairs. If we examine them closely, we must give him credit for great skill in the art of dealing with men, and profound sagacity in the conduct of public business. We also see that he professed maxims of Government which might be adopted with advantage by princes at the head of empires, and some of which, those for instance relating to the murder of Andrein, are excellent. It would have been well had he never deviated from his own maxims.

CHAPTER XII.

Moreau gains a victory at Hohenlinden over the Austrians—Celebration of that victory in Paris—The Author prepares for his journey to Corsica, but his departure is deferred in consequence of the attempt of the 3rd Nivôse—Details of that event—Its immediate result—Wrath of the First Consul with the Terrorists—Extra-legal measures proposed against that faction, by means of unconstitutional powers conferred on the Senate—Extraordinary sitting of the Council of State—Reports by the Police—Debate, and decrees of the Consuls now converted into a *Senatus-Consultum*—The Police prove that the authors of the attempt of the 3rd Nivôse belong to the Royalist party, and arrest the real criminals—Successful issue of the peace negotiations at Lunéville—The Author sets out on his journey, having received his instructions from the First Consul—Disorganized state of the south of France—Admiral Ganteaume and his squadron—The author leaves Toulon in the war-sloop *Hirondelle* and lands at Calvi.

WHILE the Government was endeavouring to parry the blows aimed at it by the Tribune, and to prepare for the coming struggle, Victory, still faithful to French arms, was about to dispel some of the difficulties with which its course was beset. Hostilities had begun; the army of Germany had just opened

the winter campaign, and on the 11th Frimaire (September 2) Moreau gained a victory, as brilliant as it was complete, over the Austrians at Hohenlinden in Bavaria. Thus the same spot which had witnessed the signing of the prorogation of the armistice at the close of year VIII. now gave its name to a memorable battle, which had most important results.

Notwithstanding the rivalry between the two great Generals, which was increased by this victory, the First Consul lavished unstinted praise on Moreau. He sent him, in the name of the Government, a pair of splendid pistols set with diamonds; salvos of artillery in Paris and the fortified towns, especially Calais, announced to England the triumph of our arms; messages were sent with great solemnity to the Legislative Body and to the Tribune. Our hopes of peace revived, the Legislative authorities appeared less adverse to it, and the general aspect of things was more favourable. During this peaceful interval the First Consul, reverting to his plan of sending me to Corsica, commanded me to present to the Legislative Body the law which suspended the authority of the constitutional government in that island. Some difficulties were raised in the Tribune, but these were readily disposed of, and the law adopted on the 23rd Frimaire (December 14) by a majority

of two hundred and sixty against three. I then read to the Council of State the report of the proposed decree, which was to define the extraordinary powers that I was to exercise in virtue of that law. It was adopted, with a few unimportant modifications, and I prepared to start. My departure was, however, delayed by a very serious event.

On the 3rd Nivôse (December 24) Haydn's Oratorio, "The Creation," was given at the Opera, and attracted a large audience. The First Consul went to the Opera House at about half-past eight. His carriage followed that of Madame Bonaparte, and was attended by his ordinary guard. At the turn into the Rue Saint-Nicaise, the explosion of a barrel of gunpowder was heard, the windows of the neighbouring houses were smashed, some walls came toppling down, and several of the passers-by were killed or severely injured.

Such was the story told me by Talleyrand and Regnault, whom I met in the lobby of the Opera House. Other details, more or less exaggerated, were added. It was, however, asserted from the very first that this explosion was not the result of accident, but the execution of a plot against the life of the First Consul. The barrel contained, besides a large quantity of compressed gunpowder, balls and bits of iron of all kinds, and was placed on a cart which barred the way of Bonaparte's carriage. It had

been fired by a train of powder. A miscalculation of the time only prevented this infernal machine from accomplishing its purpose; the First Consul had already passed by when the explosion took place. Bonaparte remained perfectly cool. On reaching the Opera he advanced to the front of his box, and, as the great danger he had incurred was as yet unknown to the audience, his presence excited only the usual amount of attention. But when the news spread, it caused the greatest sensation. All the disasters which might possibly ensue on the inopportune death of the First Consul were pictured to men's minds, and it may safely be said that never before was his life so precious, and never had he inspired so much interest. The Opera ended quietly, and many persons left the house in ignorance of the attempt on Bonaparte's life.

The following morning I went to the Tuileries, where I found, as I had expected, a great number of persons. The First Consul seemed to be convinced that the plot was the work of revolutionaries, and that this party had chosen for its instruments the assassins of September 1792, who were living at liberty in Paris, and even found safety in the protection of the police. In vain was it said that Fouché, who was present, and perhaps already better informed, endeavoured to insinuate that the Royalists and the *émigrés* might have had some hand in this fresh

conspiracy; he was not listened to. It was admitted that those whom he accused would have profited by the plot, but no one would believe they were its authors. The First Consul said to his Minister, "Don't make a *carmagnole** out of this; it was your Terrorists who did it."

During the day, the Section of the Interior and that of Legislation met to deliberate on a project of law, for the framing of a particular form of procedure and instituting exceptional Tribunals for trying attempts against the Government, and the life of the Consuls. The wise maxims which Bonaparte had professed in the affair of the assassination of the constitutional Bishop of Morbihan had already been abandoned. The united Sections proposed to refer the cognisance of crimes of this kind to the special Tribunals which were to be established for trying the plunderers of the diligences,† and also to give the Government, by a measure of "High Police," the right to banish any individual who might appear dangerous to public tranquillity. This was certainly a great deal to grant, but the First Consul was so convinced that the plot, to which he had so nearly fallen a victim, was the

* In the days of the Terror conspiracies got up by the police in order to invent criminals were called *carmagnoles*.

† At this period robbery of stage coaches had increased to a frightful extent. The Chouans, who had not been subdued, took part in this *noble* war.

work of the Terrorists, and that he had better profit by this opportunity to get rid of them altogether, that he was by no means satisfied with the plan adopted by the Sections, and read in the Council of State. After the first few phrases Bonaparte announced distinctly that he wished them to draw up a scheme for a special law to invest the Government with extraordinary power, and not one which, being in accordance with the more or less tedious forms of justice, would neither allow of the immediate punishment of the guilty, nor of the use of those strong measures of High Police, which it was necessary to employ without hesitation in the extraordinary situation of affairs.

Passing on to the history of the facts, and drawing a picture of our position, he spoke as follows : "There are from four to five hundred men, either in Paris or scattered over France, steeped in crime, without home, without occupation, and without means. These men form an army in constant action against the Government. It is they who were the instruments of the 31st of May, of the September massacres, and of those of Versailles. They it was who carried out the conspiracy of Babeuf, and that of the camp of Grenelle. It was they who attacked the Directory, and then the Government which succeeded it. They are the enemies of every form of order, no matter what its principles, of every

liberal idea, of every kind of government. They exist, and they are well known; they have their meetings, and their information; and their modes of action are derived from their familiarity with crime. This horde of hungry wolves scattered through the whole of society, and everywhere notorious; branded on the forehead with the mark of crime, keep alive a constant state of terror. What must Europe think of a Government under which such wolves live and flourish? What confidence can she have in a Government which either does not know how or else is not able to protect its own capital?—a Government under whose eyes an infernal plot which brings ruin and desolation on a portion of the inhabitants of that capital is carried out? It is impossible that these things can continue; it is time to rid society of this scourge; before five days have passed twenty or thirty of these monsters must die, and two or three hundred must be deported. As for me, I am ready to take upon myself all the weight and all the opprobrium of such a course, for I see nothing that is not honourable in such a measure of public safety. I would summon these men, whose name is in every mouth, before me; I would seat myself in the curule chair in the largest hall of the Palace wherein I dwell; and in the presence of the whole people, were it possible to unite them in one place, I would condemn them myself, and dividing the

penalty of death and that of deportation in the proportion I have just indicated, I would in one day avenge the outrages they have inflicted on society and mankind."

After this speech, which had been delivered with great warmth, opinions were divided. The difficulty of framing, and above all of obtaining a law, which should give such latitude of power to the Government, investing it as it were with a Dictatorship, led some of the members of the Council to entertain an idea which had already occurred to myself, and which in my opinion was more consonant with the actual state of things, if in reality that was what had been described to us.

We held that rather than corrupt our social institutions at their source, the First Magistrate of the Republic should have acted as Cicero did on the occasion of Catiline's conspiracy; that he would have done better had he announced to the Legislative Body and the nation that he *usurped* the Dictatorship on behalf of public safety, than by demanding the means of *exercising it legally*. But as this opinion was the effect of a momentary impulse rather than the outcome of mature reflection, it was promptly set aside, and the discussion was turning on the formulation of the proposed law, when Truguet demanded leave to speak.

After much circumlocution, and some common-

place remarks on the facts, he came to the point of his discourse, which was that in the proposed measures he could not discern any protection against enemies who were in his opinion quite as dangerous as those they openly attacked. He contended that *émigrés* and priests should also be aimed at. He stated that pamphlets were in circulation which proved their desire and intention to overturn the Government; and that, according to the admissions of Magardel,* the life of the First Consul was in as much danger from conspirators of this sort as from the men of September, whom he, Truguet, abhorred indeed, but whom he did not believe to be the only criminals. Lastly, he declared that in his opinion general measures were required which should strike at the *émigrés*, the priests, and the Royalists, as well as at the Terrorists and the fanatical revolutionaries.

The First Consul listened to this speech with the greatest impatience, and his countenance showed that he was much annoyed. He controlled himself, however, until Truguet had come to an end, when he burst forth with, "What do you mean, Citizen Truguet? explain yourself; of whom do you speak? What are the pamphlets you cite? What are the

* This Magardel, one of the leaders of the Vendéan army, had been tried in Paris by court-martial, and shot a few days before.

measures you would have taken? Do you contend that we ought to restore the law of hostages, persecute seven or eight thousand priests who have returned on the faith of my honour, and drive from the Council of State and from the Tribunate all who are called Royalists? For, if we are to believe the so-called patriots, we must send Portalis to Guiana; and Roederer is a Royalist, also Defermon himself, and all the Council, with two or three exceptions. Am I to send away all these honest, honourable, and enlightened men, and replace them by patriots? Am I to seek for councillors among the residue of the Jacobin and Cordeliers' Clubs?

“Am I once more to arouse terror and alarm in every breast? Am I to proclaim the country in danger? Am I to imitate the Merlins* and the Rewbels, by striking indiscriminately on every side? No, never! never will I be forced into such excesses. I will not persecute the priests, I will not be persuaded to hunt men down because they believe in an Almighty Being, and in a religion which is perhaps after all the true one. I will never believe that a people can be ruled or led without religion. And where are those pressing dangers that threaten the

* The reader will remember that some months earlier Napoleon had appointed Merlin to one of the first places in the Magistrature, and had given the government of Piedmont to General Jourdan, who, the preceding year, had proclaimed the country in danger in the Council of the Five Hundred.

Republic? What influence over its destiny can be exercised by a few more or less ridiculous pamphlets, which have made no lasting impression? Suppose they do liken me to Cæsar and Cromwell, what effect can that have, or what can result from it, to shake the established order that rules us? Can I prevent a fool from spoiling paper by comparing me to Cæsar? Besides, let us, like statesmen, turn our eyes on the situation of France; was it ever more brilliant? Our finances are prosperous, our armies triumphant. Since the beginning of the Revolution our peace at home has never been so untroubled. La Vendée is quiet, the Chouans are engaged in repulsing the English, and Georges Cadoudal* without any influence over the remainder of his party is wandering in the woods, accompanied by seven or eight men, and often obliged to sleep on board an English vessel. Those priests whom you would persecute are praying for me. It is true that brigandage is spreading in some of the departments;† but if the obligation to end the war did not compel me to send all our disposable troops beyond the frontiers, brigandage would long ago have been put down for ever. They who

* Georges Cadoudal, afterwards so famous for his plots against the life of the First Consul in 1804, and who then had been concerned in that of the infernal machine.

† Bonaparte alluded here to highway robberies and attacks upon stage-coaches.

trouble our peace are but few in number, but we must fall on them without mercy, for it is on them that obscure and ambitious men, thirsting for power, would rely for help, if they could see a possibility of executing their designs, and for that reason they seek to conciliate them that they may obtain their services in the event of another revolution. Undeceive yourself, Citizen Truguet; they will not spare you then any more than any other. 'Who is this Citizen Truguet?' they will say; 'a noble, an admiral, a Councillor of State; show him no mercy!'"

As he uttered this philippic, the voice of the First Consul broke; he felt he was losing his self-control, and putting on his hat in the midst of an unfinished sentence, he abruptly closed the sitting of the Council, which had come to no decision.

The deliberation on the proposed law was resumed on the morrow, and continued for several days, either in the interior of the Sections of the Council of State, or in the presence of the First Consul. None of the proposed alterations satisfied him; he always found that something was wanting to the necessities of the time, and constantly recurred to the ideas he had so vehemently expressed to us at a preceding meeting. "There is no middle course," he told us; "we must either completely pardon, or utterly put down." And as it was pointed out to him that after a criminal attempt

which struck at the whole people he had not the right to be so generous, "Then," he replied, "you must strike at the roots, at the 400 brigands perpetually drawn up in line of battle. We must force them to say, 'Fortune has forsaken us; the hand of Fate has defeated us; there is no longer any hope.' Let the chief of the band fall, the others will sink into obscurity, and you will restore to society ten thousand individuals who, being flattered by their leaders with vague and delusive hopes, have put off until now the resumption of their former occupations."

The majority agreed with the First Consul that an extraordinary measure was required, and, indeed, it could not be otherwise. We had the facts from the Government only, and we could not doubt that this plot was the work of those whom it accused. But we always recurred to the necessity of a law. The difficulty of compiling it, the danger of discussing it, and above all the position in which the Government would find itself if the law were rejected, or adopted by a feeble majority only, alarmed us; and in truth the First Consul was too wise to wish to incur such a risk. Besides, it was not a law that he wanted; a word from Talleyrand, near whom I sat at one of these meetings, threw light on the designs of the First Consul. I had said to Talleyrand that if the chances of a dis-

cussion in the Tribunate and the possible refusal of a law were risks to be avoided, I could see no way out of our difficulties, since an opinion or debate of the Council of State could not constitute law, and could still less substitute itself for a law that had been rejected by the Legislative Body. "You are right," he replied; "but is there nothing more than the Legislative Body and the Council of State? What is the good of having a Senate if we do not make use of it?" I saw in an instant all the significance of this hint, and I also understood whence it came. By taking a portion of the Legislative authority away from the ordinary authorities, by reserving to the Senate the right of pronouncing on extraordinary questions of public safety, by special acts, the Government would create a Body no longer inert and motionless, but one, whose authority, superior to all others, would dominate the entire constitutional system, and, under the pretext of preserving that system, would acquire the power of modifying it as the Government might desire; for the latter, while giving the Senate the power of framing laws, reserved to itself the right of proposing them. The deliberations of the Senate were secret; the number of the Senators was small, and the appointments were for life; once gained over, it could be always held in hand, and means of seduction were never wanting. Commanderies would be

created under the name of Senatorships, endowments would be made certain, and heredity would loom in the distance. The Senate, a cipher up to this time, would soon become the first power in the State, and though it might subsequently exercise its power only for the benefit of the Government, so long as the Government was victorious, it would still retain enough to declare the deposition of the man who had created it. From this epoch, therefore, is to be dated the origin of that singular power which gave a legal existence to those changes which we afterwards witnessed, and which, without social convulsion, or revolutionary movement, but by insensible gradations, transformed a democratic Republic into an absolute Monarchy. We cannot praise the acuteness of the First Consul too highly; in the existing emergency he saw at a glance all the future advantages that recourse to the Senate would secure to him, and by urging objections against every proposal submitted to him, he contrived to bring his Ministers and the Council of State to acknowledge that they could find no other way of settling the difficult question which occupied them than by referring it to the Senate.

It was decided that no law should be asked for; and this resolution was voted by all except three members of the Council, viz. Truguet, Lacuée and

Defermon, who had all spoken against it. The next day, 8th Nivôse (December 29), the following resolution was taken to the Consuls :

“The Council of State, in view of existing circumstances, is of opinion :

“1st. That the Government ought to establish a Military Commission as judges extraordinary of the authors and accomplices of the attempt of the 3rd Nivôse.

“2nd. That the Government, by an act of its authority, ought to decree the deportation of those persons whose presence is a danger to the State, and who might renew similar attempts.

“3rd. Lastly, that the Government ought to inform the nation of this resolution, and to announce it by a message to the Legislative Body, the Tribune and Conservative Senate.”

The Consuls did not adopt these suggestions ; but, while rejecting them, they clearly established the end which they proposed to attain, and declared that it was necessary to give to this step which was indeed unconstitutional, yet eminently conservative of the Constitution, such a character as would protect it from all future attack, in rendering it valid by the approbation of the conservative Senate, a Body especially charged with the preservation of the Constitution. It was consequently decreed—

That on the 10th Nivôse, or at latest on the 11th (January 1, 1801), the Consuls should summon a special meeting of the Ministers and Councillors of State; that the Minister of Police should read to that assembly a report on the necessity of the measure to be taken, and should submit for inspection the list of persons to be condemned to deportation; that a short discussion should follow, and that the meeting should terminate by a decree of the Council, which the Section of the Interior would be charged to draw up.

That three Councillors of State should immediately be appointed to carry to the Senate the Decree of the Council, and to explain the motives which had determined it.

That the Senate, being assembled and forewarned, should deliberate approbatively, and that these various acts should be made public, and communicated to the Legislative Body and to the Tribunal.

Finally, that the measure should be carried into immediate execution.

The 9th Nivôse was passed in preparing the decree, and in the distribution of parts, and the solemn sitting of the Council of State was announced for the 10th Nivôse at midday. But in this short interval, a rumour spread that, from information obtained concerning the affair of the 3rd Nivôse,

suspicion of the crime was thrown on a very different party from that which the police were pursuing so zealously ; that there was reason to believe that England had paid the cost of the attempt, and employed the Royalists of the Vendée in its execution.

I refused to believe in this alleged information ; I was inclined to think that the rumour was the work of the police themselves, who were endeavouring to mislead opinion by turning the public anger from the Jacobins, towards whom they had always a leaning, and directing it towards the Royalists, *émigrés* and priests, whom they hated at that time with a mortal hatred. Under this conviction, I arrived at the Council of State on the 10th Nivôse, before the hour appointed for the general sitting, and I found the Sections of the Legislation and of the Interior assembled. Réal, one of the members of the former, spoke very strongly. He asserted his conviction that the attempt had not been made by the Terrorists, but by the Chouans, and he declared, with reason, that a measure directed against a class of men in which the real criminals were not comprised was a cruel injustice. I replied that I was quite of his opinion, if it could be proved to me that the crime was the work of any other class. " But," I asked him, " how can we believe that ? How can we suppose that the Government would leave us in

an error, which would have such fatal consequences.” To my objections Réal replied that he was certain of what he advanced, and this he maintained with much warmth. The debate turned on too delicate a question to be conducted for any length of time with coolness. Animated, yet moderate, in the beginning, it soon degenerated, on the part of Réal, into personalities, which were indeed freely returned by his opponents, but which led to nothing. Each man retained his own opinion or prejudice. At two o’clock, in the heat of the discussion, it was brought to an end by an announcement that the Assembly of the Council of State was postponed to the next day, and the two sections separated. We were informed at the same time that the Senate, in an extraordinary sitting held the evening before, had adopted the plan already indicated, and that a deputation from that body had waited on the First Consul at eleven in the evening to inform him of the fact. Moreover, it had been agreed that the act demanded from the Senate should be called a ‘senatus-consultum.’ Bonaparte himself had proposed this title, and his profound political foresight already perceived all the profit he might gain from the novel procedure which he was introducing into the Legislative system. This device of the senatus-consultum,—so do words influence things—by placing it easily above the ordinary laws and consular

decrees, made the Senate a constituent Power, instead of a body of Magistrates, merely guardians of the Constitution against the usurpations of either the legislative or the executive authority. It is probable that the introduction of the *senatus-consultum* into the legislation was regarded by Bonaparte as so important to the success of his ulterior views that he was eager to seize the opportunity of obtaining the first exercise of it, and insisted on it, although he knew that such an act was not necessary, and that it fell on innocent men, innocent, at least, of the particular crime imputed to them.

It was not until long afterwards that I perceived all this. At the time I discerned in the perseverance with which the Government prosecuted the remaining Jacobins and Terrorists, only a proof of its conviction that they were participators in the attempt of the 3rd Nivôse. I felt relieved, therefore, to know that if unconstitutional means were being employed to punish the authors of the crime, at least they were not being punished with deliberate injustice, and I had no conscientious scruples when, on its being submitted to the Council of State, I voted in favour of the proposition.

The extraordinary sitting took place on the 11th Nivôse, year IX. (January 1, 1801). It was opened at 3 P.M. All the Ministers were present.

After a brief explanation of the object of the

meeting, the First Consul called upon Maret, the Secretary of State, to read two reports.

The first had been presented by Dubois, the Prefect of Police. It contained particulars of all the attempts that had been made on the life of the First Consul, from the 26th Messidor of the previous year (July 15, 1800). The conspiracy to which particular attention was drawn was hatched by one Chevalier, an enterprising man, not wanting in ability. He had been employed at Meudon, where, under the National Convention, an attempt had been made to utilise a former discovery in the fabrication of inflammable cannon-balls.* In this employment he had acquired certain knowledge which he proposed to apply to the construction of a machine which might be made to explode, and upset the First Consul's carriage on the road to Malmaison.† The machine was to have been placed on one of the little go-carts used for children; but the plot was discovered, and Chevalier and his accomplices were arrested on the 14th Brumaire, year IX. (November 5, 1800).

Since that time some attempts had been made to

* Various experiments in the use of this kind of cannon-ball on board men-of-war had been made at Versailles in 1785, under the Ministry of M. de Castries.

† The First Consul frequently went to this country house which Madame Bonaparte had bought, and which had been greatly beautified.

create disturbance among the working men of the capital, but they had failed. At last the conspiracy of the 3rd Nivôse broke out. Its authors were not yet positively known, but there was every reason to believe that they belonged to the same class as the former conspirators. The report ended with some details of the fatal consequences of the explosion of the machine in the Rue Saint-Nicaise. Eight or ten persons had either been killed on the spot or had since died of their injuries. Forty-six houses in the neighbourhood had been seriously damaged.

The second report was drawn up by a private agent, whose name did not come out. This agent was in communication with all the extreme party, and the following is a concise analysis of his report:—

A society which included several persons whose names had figured in the course of the Revolution,* directed all the plots against the life of the First Consul.

In Prairial, year VIII., they had unsuccessfully tempted the Grenadiers of the Consular Guard to desert. Since then, when Bonaparte left France for Italy, they had flattered themselves he would never

* The names given in the report are Desforges, Arena, Pepin d'Eyverchelt, Talon, Jumillard, Laignelot, Ceracchi and Gombault-Lachaise.

return, and at a dinner at the house of Gombault-Lachaise they had decided on their course of action, should the desired event take place. After they had drank to the death of the tyrant, it was agreed that at first they would wear the white cockade, so as to attract the more credulous of the Royalists, and prevent the more clear-sighted from escaping them by leaving Paris, that for forty-eight hours the capital should be given over to plunder, and that under favour of this plunder they would rid the city of the Royalists. The return of the First Consul after Marengo had disconcerted them. The conspirators then attempted a fresh plot in the month of Messidor. They were to find assassins among a company of Grenadiers belonging to a demi-brigade that had just arrived in Paris. Bonaparte was informed of this; but being fully confident in those troops, he ordered a review for the very day on which the plot was to be carried into effect, and placed himself in the direction of the fire.

This plan having failed, they looked about for a French Brutus. Moses Bayle* undertook the task and introduced a man named Metgen. He was equipped, furnished with a small sum of money, and armed with a dagger. He took his place in the

* Moses Bayle had been a Member of the National Convention, and remarkable for his revolutionary excesses. He had served in the Directory Police, under Bourguignon and even under Fouché, until 1800.

Grand Tier of the Théâtre Français on the evening when Lafont played the part of Nero in *Britannicus* for the first time, but the First Consul did not go to the theatre, and the attempt was adjourned.

These unsuccessful plots occupied the conspirators until Fructidor. In the course of that month Gombault-Lachaise invented a machine which would throw a ball to a distance of three hundred feet, and this was to be employed on the 1st Vendémiaire, year IX. They hired a room with windows looking out on the Place des Victoires, whence they intended to turn the machine on the First Consul during the funeral ceremonies in honour of Generals Desaix and Kleber. But the general arrangements and the decorations of the monument erected on the Place prevented the execution of the project.

They also contrived to effect an entrance into Malmaison during the same month, and reconnoitred the quarries on the road thither, but dared not venture on the deed.

In Vendémiaire they constructed another machine containing a kind of Greek fire, and tried an experiment with it on the 25th of that month (October 17), behind the buildings of the hospital of La Salpêtrière. Chevalier had worked the machine, and it seems that it served as a model for the one he subsequently made, and which was seized on the 14th Brumaire, when he was arrested.

Besides all this, they had drawn up the plan of a Constitution for France, after the death of the First Consul. One Didier, probably the same who was accused under the Directory at the time of the Babeuf conspiracy, was designated as Mayor of Paris.

These attempts were the work of an association which called itself *The Company of Tyrannicides*, and whose members were bound by a special oath.

When these two Reports had been read, Fouché, the Minister of Police, rose to speak.

He presumed that the Government must now be undeceived regarding the system of generosity it had hitherto pursued towards the scoundrels who were threatening it. "Since September 1792," said he, "the same individuals have always been conspiring against every kind of Government." He recapitulated their devices from the establishment of the Consulate until the plot of the 3rd Nivôse, "*a plot the thread of which is in the hands of the police, who will supply such information to justice as will keep it on the right track.*" He divided these men into two classes; those who with their own hands had shed blood, and those who were implicated whether as instigators or approvers. The first only he proposed to treat with severity.

The Minister next recapitulated the various conspiracies mentioned in the report of the Prefect of

Police, as well as in that of the secret agent, and gave further and more precise details concerning them. Lastly, after naming the principal accomplices, he concluded by proposing the banishment from Paris and from France of all the Septembrisists or Terrorists, and by reducing his motion to four principal heads.

1st. The accused to be brought before a military tribunal.

2nd. The Septembrisists to be deported.

3rd. The remaining Terrorists to be exiled from Paris.

4th. A law to impose conditions upon residing in Paris to be demanded.

The Secretary of State, Maret, then read out the list of individuals for deportation. The greater number were unknown to the members of the Council. The only remarkable persons were Prince Charles of Hesse, Destrem, Botto, Felix, Lepelletier, Fournier the American, and some others, who had been more or less noticeable during the course of the Revolution, for their exaggerated opinions, or actions.

The reading of these various papers being ended, the debate began. It turned especially on the report of the Minister of Police and on the conclusions he had drawn. Several members of the

Council, myself among the number, remarked that the Minister spoke with extreme reserve of the event of the 3rd Nivôse, whereas he gave exact and full details of the preceding plots; and that only by analogy, and the similarity of the means employed, could the conclusion be reached that the authors of the latter criminal design belonged to the class pointed out by the Minister, against which exclusively he proposed severe measures.

I went farther, and stated my opinion that if the report of the Minister were to be published in order to justify the impending measures, it would be indispensable to modify the phrase which I have italicised above, as it appeared to cast suspicion on a class to which those who were being prosecuted did not belong.

These observations were, on the whole, well received, an attentive examination of the papers that it would be desirable to publish was promised, and the First Consul, regarding the debate as concluded, put the three following questions to the vote.

First. Is it necessary, under existing circumstances, to have recourse to an extraordinary measure? Unanimously resolved in the affirmative.

Secondly. Ought that measure to form the matter of a law? Unanimously resolved in the negative, with the exception of Truguet.

Thirdly. Shall this measure be referred to the Conservative Senate? Unanimously resolved in the affirmative.

When I reflect on what took place at that sitting I can only deplore the facility with which men under the sway of a fixed idea are led away in political assemblies. In the case which I am relating, the fixed idea of the Members of the Council of State was the conviction that the Terrorists were the only enemies dangerous to the Government; that men, themselves stained by the greatest excesses, and who had shed the blood of their fellow-citizens, ought to be outlawed by society; and that the accomplishment of that end was so great a benefit, that every means of attaining it was justifiable. This was a false and dangerous maxim, the application of which may entail fatal consequences! Thus, although a calm examination of the reports that had just been read to us would have made us more than ever doubtful that the real criminals of the 3rd Nivôse were threatened by the proposed measure, we unanimously agreed, without hesitation, to the propositions submitted to us. But the Government carefully abstained from exposing the reports that had been read to the Council to the dispassionate discussion which publicity would have entailed; the weak side of those reports would have been immediately recognised, and public opinion would not

have been satisfied with them. No part of the papers read to us was printed, and the Report of the Minister of Police, which three days afterwards was presented to the Senate, and was supposed to have served as the basis of the discussion at the Council of State, was altogether different from the one we had listened to; the questions on which we had to deliberate were not presented in the same way, and in the list of names for deportation, several of those which were comprised in Maret's list, among others that of Botto, formerly Secretary to Barras, were suppressed.

The Senate, however, already favourably disposed, showed no hesitation, and the *senatus-consultum*, carried up by three orators of the State-Council—Roederer, Simeon, and Portalis—was rendered. As the first act of the kind, it cemented the union of the Senate with the Government, and created that powerful instrument which served to build up the edifice which Bonaparte was then meditating, and which he so rapidly succeeded in erecting.

I must add, moreover, that the Government made little use of the right to deport the Terrorists which had just been conferred upon it by the Senate. They employed it in only a few cases. The individuals were simply banished from Paris, not deported, and were subsequently allowed to return.

Perhaps the First Consul, according as more positive information disclosed the real authors of the attempt of the 3rd Nivôse, felt the injustice of inflicting punishment on innocent persons; or, being satisfied with having put the Senate in action and created a new source of power, from which he purposed to derive immense advantage, he did not wish to excite popular discontent by the severity of the first act of authority it enabled him to exert. However this may be, it is a fact that the *senatus-consultum* produced little result, and soon became a dead letter.

The event of the 3rd Nivôse led to Ceracchi and his accomplices being brought to trial, for having attempted the life of the First Consul on the 18th Vendémiaire. Until now no proceedings had been commenced. The act of accusation was drawn up on the 6th Nivôse (December 27), and by a judgment delivered on the 19th of the same month (January 9) Ceracchi, Demerville, Joseph Arena and Topino Lebrun were condemned to death and executed. The Tribunal acquitted the other accused persons.

Shortly afterwards, the real authors of the attempt of the 3rd Nivôse became known. The gates of Paris had been shut from the 20th Nivôse (January 10, 1801) and this police measure, which during the Revolution was only resorted to on occasions of

serious danger, real or supposed, lasted for several days. To enter or to leave Paris was alike forbidden, without the production of a safe conduct or a passport. A strict supervision was exercised over strangers dwelling in Paris. Extraordinary measures had been taken for the arrest of various persons, especially among the Chouans and the returned *émigrés*. The police, in fact, mostly pursued their enquiries among the latter, and delayed or neglected the execution of the *senatus-consultum* against the Terrorists. Everything pointed to the conclusion that the police authorities were convinced that the real criminals of the 3rd Nivôse would be found among the Royalists of La Vendée or of Brittany, nor were they mistaken. In short, between the 29th Nivôse and the 8th Pluviôse, the three principal actors in the conspiracy, the constructors of the Infernal Machine, were arrested. Their names are as follows.

Carbon, alias Petit François, Captain in the Vendéan army, and serving under General Bourmont.

Timoleon, Chief of the Staff of the above-named General.

Saint-Rejeant, alias Pierrot, Lieutenant under Georges Cadoudal, the Commander-in-Chief of the Chouans in Morbihan.*

* It was Saint-Rejeant who fired the infernal machine. The violence of the shock flung him against a post, and part of his

Thus all doubt was removed, and the Chief of the Police was triumphant. But his conduct in this business was not the less odious. What can be thought of a man who consents to hand over a considerable number of persons to public vengeance, when all the time he is convinced that not one of them is guilty, or even implicated in the crime of which they are all accused! This was a source of endless regret for those in authority who, deceived by lying reports, gave their consent to these iniquitous sentences! For my own part I have never forgiven myself for my share in this matter. The most remarkable part of it was the selection of the orators who were sent to the Senate. Roederer, no doubt, acted in perfect good faith. But how could Portalis and Simeon, who at a later period prided themselves on having constantly acted as agents of the Bourbons under the Empire, consent to support before the Senate an arbitrary measure which they well knew to be unjust.

I have dwelt at length on the celebrated date of the 3rd Nivôse, and I was bound to do so. The details it has given me an opportunity of narrating,

breast-bone was driven in. He was obliged to resort to a surgeon, and it would seem that this man denounced him. See, besides, the report of 11th Pluviôse by the Minister of Police, which appeared in the 'Moniteur' on the 12th, very different to the one he had read a month earlier at the Council of State.

the growing inclination towards despotism, with which Bonaparte's danger inspired him at this time, are worthy of attentive consideration. Recognizing that he had equally formidable enemies in the two extreme parties, the Royalists and the Terrorists, he became persuaded that Supreme Power alone could save him from plots against his life, and the unexpected docility displayed by all the bodies of the State convinced him that thenceforth there was nothing he might not attempt with great probability of success. Not, however, that those bodies or the citizens were already prepared to confer on him the absolute Sovereignty which he acquired two years later; but the public imagination was so deeply impressed with the idea that he was the necessary man, and so terrified at the abyss into which the nation must fall if he failed it, that no sacrifice was thought too costly to preserve a life on which the existence of France herself depended. Bonaparte was therefore greatly indebted to his enemies. By aiming at his life with the assassin's dagger they had revealed to him the secret of his strength, and enforced on him, so to speak, the necessity of exerting it.

The criminal and unsuccessful attempt of the 3rd Nivôse had also the effect of hastening the conclusion of the negotiations which had been seriously resumed at Lunéville, in consequence of our military

successes in Italy and our victory at Hohenlinden. Fortune had delivered Bonaparte from several conspiracies, and France had been saved from the anarchy which would have been caused by his death, so that it had become a necessity for the Powers to treat with her. Peace, Austria's sole resource, was equally needful for Bonaparte in order that he might tranquillise the interior of France, especially the Southern Provinces, which were still laid waste by brigandage and by a sanguinary reaction. Joseph Bonaparte and Count von Cobentzel speedily agreed upon the principal points of the treaty, and I was gratified to hear this good news.

But I was not destined to witness the triumph of the negotiator on his return to Paris. The First Consul hurried me off to Corsica. The Consular Act, appointing me Administrator General of the two departments of Golo and Liamone, into which the island was at that time divided, had been sent to me on the 21st Nivôse (January 11), together with a decree of the Council of State conferring extensive powers on me during the suspension of the rule of the Constitution, a suspension which had been pronounced by law.

I therefore prepared to set out; but before my departure, I had several interviews with the First Consul, from whom I received instruction as to the line I was to follow in my administration.

He desired, after having restored peace in the country, to exercise a salutary influence on the manners and customs of his fellow countrymen, to civilise them; to introduce new modes of cultivation into an island so favoured by climate and situation; to embellish the towns, especially Ajaccio his birthplace, and to bring salubrious water within reach of its inhabitants; lastly, to construct roads and make them fit for wheeled traffic. I gladly undertook to assist him in these benevolent endeavours, and although I could not disguise from myself the difficulties in my way—several serious disturbances having occurred in the island since the departure of the English—I felt my spirits rise with the hope of doing some good. I hastened to collect everything that could help me in the execution of these desirable projects. I obtained from five to six thousand volumes from the Minister of the Interior, to form the nucleus of a public library in Ajaccio; a printing-press for the same town, and a quantity of seeds and grafts, which the esteemed Thouni himself selected for me. I hoped to naturalise in Corsica some of the productions of America, such as cotton, indigo, and the cactus, which supplies food to the cochineal; live specimens of that insect were also given me. This valuable collection was entrusted to M. Noisette, a skilful gardener who accompanied me to the island.

All my preparations being complete, I left Paris with my family on the 15th Pluviôse, year IX. (February 4, 1801). The roads were at that time in a frightful condition. Our carriages were upset twice before we reached Lyons, where I embarked on the Rhone, and went by boat as far as Avignon. To the latter town, on the evening of the 28th Pluviôse, a trade-courier, on his way to Marseilles, brought the news of the conclusion of peace between France and Austria at Lunéville, on the 20th Pluviôse (Feb. 9).

After various accidents caused by the bad state of the roads, I arrived at Toulon on the 7th Ventôse (Feb. 26).

The south of France was still far from tranquil. Brigandage and murder were of common occurrence, and the inhabitants in general showed little liking for the Consular Government. The news of peace had made but a slight impression; it was hardly believed, and the report was regarded as a trick of the Government. We had need of a considerable escort to make the journey between Marseilles and Toulon in safety, and to cross the gorges of Ollioules, a very dangerous passage at that time. General Cervoni* who was in command of the eighth

* General Cervoni was a Corsican by birth, deeply attached to the Bonaparte family, an able soldier, and, moreover, a very estimable man. During my stay at Marseilles, he gave me

Military Division, of which the departments of the Rhone and Var form a part, was active in repress-

some particulars of the origin of the greatness of the First Consul, which I will set down here. Bonaparte was in Corsica at the beginning of the Revolution; he was appointed to a command in the National Guard when that body was organized. Persecuted by the partisans of Paoli, he and his family took refuge in France and came to Marseilles. He was then merely a captain of artillery, and in that capacity was ordered to escort a convoy of gunpowder from Avignon for the siege of Toulon. Having accomplished this task, he passed through Marseilles just at the moment when Gasparin and Salicetti, Commissioners of the Convention, attached to the troops besieging Toulon, had directed Cervoni to ask the Military Commander of Marseilles for an artillery officer, to whom part of the siege works might be confided. Joseph Bonaparte, who was then at Marseilles, informed Cervoni of his brother's arrival, and they went together to seek Napoleon at the Club. They invited him to drink punch at a neighbouring café, and proposed to him that he should go to the siege of Toulon. Bonaparte made some difficulty before accepting; he had a poor opinion of Carteaux, who was conducting the siege. However, he was at last induced to consent. On his arrival before Toulon Bonaparte went immediately to inspect the batteries, and everything appertaining to the service of the artillery, and was exceedingly dissatisfied. The positions appeared to him badly chosen; and he noticed in particular that a battery directed against the enemy's fleet was at too great a distance. He therefore declared openly to Gasparin that he could not possibly serve under a general who had not the most elementary military knowledge. Gasparin was struck with this declaration, recognised all that might be expected from a man who already showed signs of the ability he was afterwards to display so successfully. He wrote in this sense to the Committee of Public Safety, who recalled Carteaux and replaced

ing the universally prevalent disorder; but he was ill-seconded by the municipalities, who trembled before the remnants of the bands of assassins which had been organized two years previously, and had committed the most frightful excesses. The municipal authorities dared not prosecute the guilty men, and crimes were committed in broad daylight without either a complaint being lodged or a witness found to aid the law in its pursuit of the criminals. Thus at every period of our troubles the southern towns have shown the same passionateness on one side or the other. Absurd intolerance and sanguinary fury have continually dishonoured the side adopted by the South.

Orders had been given at Toulon to equip a corvette to convey me to Corsica. As she was not in readiness when I arrived, I was obliged to prolong my stay for nearly three weeks.

Another circumstance also aided to delay me. A French squadron under Admiral Ganteaume had entered the roadstead of Toulon, on the 6th Ventôse. From day to day we awaited its departure for Egypt,

him by Dugommier. Bonaparte got on well with the new general, and predicted that, with Dugommier directing the siege, Toulon would fall within the month. The event justified this prediction. After the taking of Toulon Bonaparte was named General of Brigade, and this was the origin of his military glory and success.

for we hoped that by sailing at the same time our ship would be escorted as far as Corsica. But the time consumed in repairing several of the vessels of this squadron, which were damaged by the wind, and the supineness of the Admiral, as well as difficulties of detail, which cropped up every day, detained us in the roadstead until the end of the month. The expedition commanded by Admiral Ganteaume was in reality destined for Egypt, where it was to land two thousand men, but this destination had been masked at the time of its departure from Brest, under the pretence of sending it to Saint-Domingo. Lescalier, Councillor of State, and General Satruguet had embarked with the fleet; the first as Administrator-General; the second as Captain-General of that colony. A large number of negro officers had also embarked, believing they were going to serve under the orders of Toussaint l'Ouverture, and it was only when the squadron passed through the Straits of Gibraltar that each and all found they had been deceived.

Notwithstanding these precautions, and this deception of which they were the dupes, the expedition had not succeeded. From what Ganteaume himself told me, he had found superior forces on the Coast of Africa, and moreover he had believed himself to be followed by a division of the enemy that had entered the Mediterranean after him. The fear of

finding himself between two squadrons with but feeble resources, and compromising the precious remnants of our navy, had determined him to cast anchor at Toulon. Since his arrival only a few of the enemy's frigates had been seen cruising about, to take observations of the movements of the French squadron, and no formidable force had appeared.

When Bonaparte heard that the squadron had put into Toulon, and that it was remaining there, he was very angry, and sent Colonel Lucien, one of his aides-de-camp, to urge Ganteaume to put to sea. The only hope of retaining Egypt, or at least enabling the French to maintain their position there some time longer, lay in the arrival of the troops and succour of all kinds sent out by this squadron—if it failed to arrive, the conquest must be entirely abandoned. But notwithstanding all the importance the Government seemed to attach to this expedition, Ganteaume delayed his departure from day to day; he even purposely exaggerated the enemy's forces by which he said he was pursued; for it was known afterwards that the English had only three or four men-of-war on the Coast of Africa, or before Alexandria, and the French squadron was by far the stronger. On the other hand, very serious differences had arisen between the Admiral and General Satruguet, in command of the troops on board, and everything

seemed to combine to render the expedition a failure.* At last, after a delay of twenty-three days in the roadstead of Toulon, the French squadron weighed anchor on the 29th Ventôse (March 20) at six in the evening. The war-sloop *Hirondelle*, with myself, my family, and several other persons employed in the Corsican Administration on board, set sail at the same time, under escort of the fleet. The north-west wind blew very strong. Hardly had we left the roadstead when the Admiral hailed us, to say that one of his vessels had struck, that he could no longer make way, and had brought-to, waiting until the ship could be got off.

As he gave us no orders, the captain of our vessel determined to remain with the squadron; but at eleven o'clock a violent wind arose, and the sea became so rough that we were unable to remain with the squadron. The next morning we found ourselves altogether separated from it, and in sight of the islands of Hyères. In the evening, the wind having fallen, we cast anchor at Saint-Tropez, where we were detained two days awaiting a favourable wind.

* In fact it did fail completely, and in the same year (1801) Ganteaume brought back his squadron to Toulon without having effected the disembarkation of the troops. Nevertheless he was a very skilful commander, as he proved in the more fortunate expedition sent to revictual Corfu in 1807, and of which I shall have future occasion to speak.

We set sail again on the 1st Germinal (March 22), and the next morning we sighted Corsica, but were detained near the coast by a dead calm, which prevented us from doubling Cape Roux to reach Ajaccio. The captain of the *Hirondelle* put in at Calvi, where we landed on the morning of the 4th Germinal, year IX. (March 25, 1801). From Calvi, crossing the island by difficult roads, on the 10th Germinal (March 31) we reached Ajaccio, where I established myself in the house of the Bonaparte family, which had been placed at my disposal by the First Consul.

CHAPTER XIII.

State of Corsica at the period of the Author's arrival—His proposed system for the administration of the country—Difficulties thrown in his way by the partisans of the Bonaparte family, and the military authorities—He dismisses General Muller, Commandant of the Division, from the island—Improvements introduced into the country—An account of the Author's excursion to Monte-Rotondo—Curious fête given in his honour at Cervione—The organic laws of the Concordat concluded with the Pope—The Life-Consulship—Little interest shown by the Corsicans in voting for it—Numerous adverse votes among the troops—Journey to Monte d'Oro—Information concerning the Bonaparte family and their origin—The Author is recalled, and Corsica is again placed under the rule of the Constitution—Sketch of the state of the island and the customs of the inhabitants.

ON the whole I was well received in Corsica; the recollections of my first mission to the island were favourable to me; my impartiality, and that a sincere desire to restore peace to the country was the sole aim of all my actions was well known. The people believed me to be still animated by the same sentiments, and they were not mistaken. My greatest difficulties, therefore, did not lie in the

aversion or the opposition of the inhabitants, but arose from the ascendancy exercised by the partisans of the First Consul's family, and which they wanted to continue to exercise. They looked upon me merely as their instrument, to be used solely to get rid of their enemies, and to confer favours on their protégés. I was by no means inclined to play such a part as this, and had I done so, I should not only have failed in my most obvious duty, but I should have added to the discord which it was my principal business to appease. I therefore assumed an independent attitude, and I soon became a mark for the enmity of all those who did not find me sufficiently pliant, and who made complaints and accusations of all kinds against me at Paris. I had much to bear from these machinations, although I must do the First Consul the justice to say that he perseveringly protected me when I was attacked by the basest calumnies, and would never withdraw his confidence from me.

I shall now describe the state of the country when I arrived, and the course which I adopted in the management of public affairs.

At the close of my first mission Corsica had been brought under the rule of the Constitution of year III., and during the whole existence of that Constitution the island had been governed by Departmental administrations, whose members were selected

from among the inhabitants of the island exclusively. The elections, which were sometimes contested by the armed partisans of the various factions into which the wealthiest and most powerful families were divided, had been a constant pretext for disturbance which frequently led to bloodshed.

When the elections were over, the victorious party would make use of its power, avenge itself on its opponents, and by heaping up acts of petty persecution and injustice, would finally drive the people into open revolt. The revolution of the 18th Brumaire took place. But in the island the result was not the same as in the interior of France. A kind of military rule took the place of the administration that during the last years of the Executive Directory had been confided to men actually born in the island, and at the beginning of year VIII. the General in command of the division united, so to speak, every kind of authority in his own person, although the central administrations did not formally cease to exercise their functions until the arrival of the Prefects.

Notwithstanding this change, the establishment of the Consular Government and the Constitution of year VIII. had had but little effect. Salicetti, who had been sent to Corsica as the delegate of the Consuls, had not succeeded in preventing the evil consequences of the adverse disposition of the public

mind. Being a native of the country, and therefore always suspected of partiality, he met with obstinate opposition everywhere. The inhabitants, exasperated by long-continued persecution, and agitated by the false hopes that were disseminated through the interior by returned *émigrés* and by emissaries of the English, were very unmanageable; and the severity of the means employed, perhaps without due regard to prudence, to repress the beginning of trouble, had ended by causing positive insurrections in several parts of the island. Thus in the months of Floréal and Prairial of year VIII. (May and June 1800) a revolt had broken out in the cantons of Porto-Vecchio and Fiumorbo,* and afterwards in Balagna. The attempt to repress the insurrection had utterly failed in the two first cantons; the troops which were sent there for the purpose had been forced to fall back, on account of the total interruption of communications. Balagna, on the contrary, had been quickly subdued by a force of 2000 men, who penetrated into that province, the richest of the island. Severe measures had been taken against the insurgents; many of them were hanged, and the Consular delegates imposed a fine of 2,000,000 francs (£80,000), of which, however, only 400,000 (£16,000) was realised.

* Thinly inhabited and somewhat uncivilised cantons on the eastern coast of Corsica.

Notwithstanding the subjugation of Balagna, and the numerous sentences passed by the Military Commission which Salicetti had instituted, the country was still far from perfect tranquillity. Some men who had been condemned and had afterwards escaped the execution of their sentences, had taken refuge in the mountains and were a terror to the country, carrying on a system of brigandage which they exercised on all travellers, and also perpetrating acts of private vengeance. No one could travel in any direction without an escort, and it was frequently necessary to send a detachment of five or six men, in order to convey a letter from one post to another.

The effect of this state of things was more or less perceptible in all parts of the island, and was rendered still more serious by the dearth of provisions and the high price of bread; by the discontent of the troops, whose pay was in arrear, and whose destitution was extreme; by the delay in the arrival of the funds that had been sent from Paris to provide for their wants; by the anger excited by the manner in which those funds were expended, particularly the money produced by the Balagna fine; and, lastly, by the absolute default of justice.

The institution of juries in Corsica had rendered it impossible to punish crime. Divided as

they were into parties, and at the same time almost all connected by family ties, the inhabitants, who from the remotest period of their social existence had been accustomed to avenge their injuries themselves, or to hand down the task of vengeance from generation to generation, looking upon revenge as a sacred debt of honour ; the inhabitants, I say, were incapable of conceiving a just idea of the duty and office of juries. The strongest evidence, even positive proof of crime, never induced a jury composed of men of the same party, or the same family, as the accused, to pronounce him guilty, because public opinion attaches dishonour to any one who, to use the expression of the country, “denies his party or deserts his blood.” If, on the contrary, the accused were of the opposite party to that of the jury, the certainty of being mercilessly hunted down, and of incurring a vengeance which at best could only be deferred, equally paralysed the action of trial by jury, and the useless and expensive proceedings were almost always null and void.

Such was the state of Corsica at the time of my arrival. To extricate the country from this deplorable condition the Government had proposed and obtained the law which suspended the Constitution in the departments of Golo and Liamone, and this, far from being an act of severity, as it appeared

to be at first sight, was in reality a substantial benefit.

Having received instructions from my Government, and having been granted very wide powers for governing a country where the difficulties to be overcome were so great, I laid down for myself a plan of conduct differing from that which had been followed hitherto. I applied myself first to restoring the course of justice, which had been in abeyance for several years; and my first care was the institution of a criminal tribunal equally composed of civil and military judges. But I imposed at the same time a rule on this tribunal, that in proportion as it should rigorously punish such offences and crimes as, whatever may be the opinions of a nation and the mode of its Government, are real crimes and offences, so it should show consideration and even indulgence towards actions belonging exclusively to the political order, which had a more or less legitimate excuse in the numerous revolutionary movements that had taken place in Corsica, and the contending influence successively exerted by those who had been at the head of affairs in the country.

At the same time, therefore, that I granted an amnesty in the name of the Government to the insurgents of Fiumorbo and Porto-Vecchio; that I allowed the men who, after the insurrection of

Balagna, had fled into the mountains to come back to their homes *under caution*; that I permitted the return of several individuals whose names had been from motives of personal animosity inscribed on the list of *émigrés*,* I gave no chance of escape either to assassins or brigands. Many of these, who had been arrested and publicly tried by the Extraordinary Tribunal which I had established at Ajaccio, were punished with death, and that salutary example, which announced the re-establishment of legal justice, had a happy effect. In less than three months I had the satisfaction of finding confidence restored, property secure, long-interrupted communications once more open, and trust in the impartiality and firmness of the Government growing daily.

Still, notwithstanding these encouraging results, my efforts were far from being universally appreciated and supported.† My impartiality in the appointment of officials, my strict rectitude in the management of the public moneys, my inexorable

* The First Consul had himself told me, in Paris, that he did not believe more than thirty individuals could, with justice, be retained on the list of *émigrés*.

† One of the greatest misfortunes of the Administration in Corsica is that a post in that island is always regarded in France as a punishment and not a favour, and that either the most ordinary individuals are sent thither, or else persons who have given dissatisfaction in Paris.

punishment of extortion and exactions, procured me a great many enemies.

The military especially, mortified that extraordinary powers which extended even over them had been conferred upon me, showed me decided hostility. Far from helping me in my endeavours to restore public tranquillity, they thwarted them to the best of their power. At last, General Muller, who was in command of the division, a brave soldier but of little judgment, declared himself so openly against me, and conducted himself with so much impropriety, that I was obliged, for my own authority's sake, to order him back to France. This decisive act, of which the First Consul did not disapprove, bettered my position, and for a time silenced my adversaries. But they soon returned to the charge with renewed violence. It was Bonaparte's uncle, afterwards Cardinal Fesch, and General Casabianca who especially opposed me in Paris. I had refused to confer favours and appointments to which they had no claim on some protégés of theirs. This could not be forgiven me, and they made complaints of every one of my actions to the Ministers, who being themselves displeased at the removal of Corsica from their administration, lent a willing ear to all they had to say. My difficulties therefore increased at every step, and I had need of all my strength to weather the storm. I shall not

enter into the particulars of the intricate affairs I had to manage. At that time they occupied me entirely; they were of great importance to the country and to myself; they are of none now. I shall only say a few words of the improvements which I effected in the island.

Through my exertions a high road was opened in the interior of Corsica, by which easy communication between Ajaccio and Bastia was established. This road, which crosses the mountain-chain that divides Corsica into two unequal parts, is highly picturesque. At the time of my departure from the island it was in a forward state, and I believe the works were continued afterwards and the road brought to perfection. All I can say is that my family travelled along it in a carriage, the first time that a vehicle had come from Ajaccio to Corte, through the difficult pass of Foce di Guizzavona.

The town of Ajaccio was embellished and enlarged; some old fortifications were levelled, and a new suburb arose on their site. The library that I had brought with me was deposited in the buildings formerly owned by the Jesuits, and was thrown open to the inhabitants. The printing-press was set up, and vied with that of Bastia, the only one until then existing in Corsica. Some land belonging to the State, to the west of Ajaccio, was formed into a botanical garden, where the seeds and plants

I had obtained in Paris, throve, on the whole, exceedingly well. Cotton-grass, the cotton-trees, and indigo, were in full growth. The cochineal-cactus had taken root, and the insect that feeds on it was flourishing. I had found a water supply for the town from whence a canal could be brought through the Botanical Gardens, which might then have been considerably enlarged. Meanwhile I had caused a large reservoir which sufficed for present wants to be constructed. These useful and peaceful victories over nature were to me a delightful pastime, and a very real consolation amid the cares that habitually oppressed me. I had even the satisfaction of feeling that my labours were not altogether without reward, and that I was repaid by the affection of at least a portion of the inhabitants. I had an opportunity of testing this in the course of my numerous journeys into the interior. In the month of Fructidor, year IX., and in the month of Thermidor, year X., I explored the two highest mountains of Corsica, Monte-Rotondo and Monte d'Oro, and as I am unacquainted with any book of travels in which a description of those mountains is to be found, I will insert at this place an extract from my journal, beginning with my first excursion.

EXCURSION TO MONTE-ROTONDO

(also called *Monte-Gradaccio* in old Corsican Maps).

We started from Bastia on the 11th Fructidor, year IX. (August 29, 1801), and proceeded to Corta,* not by the high road, but across the mountains by way of Biguglia and Murato. From Murato we came to Corta to pass the night.

We left Corta on the 12th Fructidor at 2 P.M. with two shepherds who acted as guides, and directed our way towards the west, ascending the Restonica, one of the two rivers that flow through Corta. We halted at 5 P.M. and passed the night on the ridge of a mountain called La Punta del Renoso, one of the counter-forts of Monte-Rotondo. From this point we resumed our way at two o'clock A.M., by the light of the newly risen moon. We first went up a valley formed by two spurs of the Punta del Renoso, and through which flows a stream called the Rivisecco, which empties itself farther on into the Restonica. The air was chill, but the way so rugged that we were all bathed in perspiration. After two hours of most difficult walking we crossed the Punta del Renoso, which is

* My fellow-travellers were MM. Pietri, Prefect of Golo; Méthuan, a mining engineer; Demony, a young man employed in my administration, and Noisette, a botanist.

a sort of barrier closing the valley, and whence the Rivisecco dashes down in a cascade. We found it again on the other side of the natural dyke I have just mentioned, and we followed it, still ascending, to its source at the foot of Monte-Rotondo. It is alleged that this source is in reality that of the Restonica, and consequently it would be the Rivisecco that takes the name of Restonica, when it joins the waters of the valley through which we had passed on leaving Corta. This would be a nice point to determine, for the name of Restonica in these mountains seems common to all the streams which flow to the east of Monte-Rotondo.

On reaching the foot of the latter mountain we were enabled to appreciate its external form. It presents the appearance of a truncated cone, crowned with several bare summits more or less needle-shaped. Two very steep ascents lead up to it. We followed that on the left, which forms the southern flank of the mountain. The ascent was at first easy enough; we passed a few small shrubs, such as *Alnus* (*Vetula alnus*) and the juniper (*Juniperus communis*), but they were extremely stunted. Very soon, however, all vegetation disappeared, and the path became so steep that we had great difficulty in reaching a col which separates two of the aiguilles that rise above the mountain. It was 8 A.M. when we reached this point, whence we could

observe the curious configuration of the mountain. It absolutely resembles an amphitheatre, in which there is a wide opening for the escape of the waters of a lake contained in what might be the arena. The walls of this amphitheatre are almost perpendicular, and must have been quite so originally, for it is easy to see that the rocky fragments which give them more slope and render it possible to climb to the top of the wall are but slips of the crest, and that the needles and isolated summits are formed simply by portions of rock which have resisted the attacks of time, and other causes to which the destruction of this gigantic wall may be attributed.

From the col to which we had climbed with so much difficulty, we could enjoy a delightful view, but after having come so far it was impossible not to wish to reach the highest point of the mountain now rising on our right. After a few moments rest, therefore, we resumed our way, and keeping as much as possible on the summit of the wall, and springing from rock to rock, we at last reached the highest point and the object of our expedition. We took our stand on a pyramid of stones heaped together fifteen years before by M. Barral,* whose name as well as that of M. de Laguillaumie, the former Intendant of Corsica, is carved on one of the

* M. Barral, an engineer in the navy, travelled in Corsica in 1784 and 1785, and published a description of the island.

stones, with the date 1785, and we admired at our leisure the magnificent scene which lay beneath and around us.

The point on which we were standing, whose elevation, according to the '*Annuaire du Bureau des Longitudes*,' is 2672 yards above the level of the sea, is situated almost in the exact centre of the island, if we exclude from it the promontory of Cape Corso. From this spot we overlooked all the other mountains of the island, which form circular ranges round Monte-Rotondo, diminishing in height as they approach the seashore. A vast stretch of the Mediterranean lay before us; Sardinia, the island of Elba, the coasts of Italy with all their little scattered isles, and no doubt we could have also seen the coasts of Spain and France, but for the clouds which obscured the horizon in their direction.

The highest ranges of the island, next to Monte-Rotondo, are those of Monte-Cinto to the north-west, and that of Monte d'Oro to the south. In the spaces between the various ranges which, as I have said, form a circular chain round Monte-Rotondo, we could perceive numerous lakes at different heights, whence flow the principal rivers, or, to be more accurate, the largest streams that water the island.

It is one of the most remarkable physical peculiarities of Corsica that these lakes are like funnels placed in the centre of the mountains, and are

generally circular in shape. The circumference of the lake that occupies what I call the arena of the Monte-Rotondo amphitheatre is about 700 yards. The waters are extremely cold, and although very clear, look almost black, because of the depth of the basins which contain them. Many fables are current among the shepherds as to their origin; they are regarded as the work of a supernatural power, and many most improbable phenomena are attributed to them. It is said that in one of them, Lake Melo or Meluccio, no living being can be immersed without instantly becoming a fleshless skeleton. One of the shepherds who accompanied us said that although he was a good swimmer nothing on earth would induce him to throw himself into that lake. The following particulars respecting the lakes nearest to our standpoint may be interesting.

The lake of Monte-Rotondo is the source of the Vecchio, a river which flows through the canton of the same name into the Tavignano.

The Restonica, or more accurately the Rivisecco, rises from a small lake that we had remarked on the ascent of Monte-Rotondo.

Lake d'Ino gives birth to the Galo, the Liamone and the Tavignano. The waters appear to part at a certain point, the Galo flowing to the east, the Tavignano to the south-east, and the Liamone to the west.

Lake Creno supplies a tributary to the Liamone.

Lake Melo receives part of the waters of the two last-named lakes, which are situated above it, and gives out a stream which, joining the Rivisecco, becomes the Restonica.

After we had contemplated these varied scenes, we decided on descending the mountain by the path opposite to that by which we had come up, that is to say, by the northern, or rather the north-west side of the mountain. In order to accomplish this, we were obliged first to get down to the edge of the lake at the bottom of the amphitheatre, and then to climb again by the only practicable point of the circular wall. We succeeded after much labour. Having once more gained the summit of the wall, at a point almost facing M. Barrel's pyramid, we began the descent, and taking a northerly direction, we passed in succession, along very steep and difficult paths, the shores of Lake Ino, Lake Creno and Lake Melo. We halted at the side of the latter, whose wild and picturesque aspect harmonises admirably with the stern and terrible landscape that surrounds it. The basin in which the lake is enclosed is formed by a kind of natural dyke caused by landslips from the neighbouring mountains, and the stream which flows from it rushes in a cascade over this dyke. From the banks of Lake Melo we traced, not without a shudder, the path by which we

had reached it. After following the borders of the lake, which we left on our right, we continued our descent, and at length arrived at the first shepherds' huts that are met with below Monte-Rotondo. This group of five or six cabins bears the name of the Grotelle. It was 5 P.M. when we reached it; so that we had been walking for fifteen hours without intermission. We entered one of the cabins, intending to remain until the morrow, but during the night we were overtaken by a storm which obliged us to quit our place of shelter in order to cross the neighbouring stream, as it had in a few hours swollen to such an extent that it would have been impossible for us to have crossed it next morning. Having escaped this danger, we set out at daybreak for Corta, and arrived there on the 14th Fructidor (September 1). On the following day I started for Orezza, journeying through the Canton of Rostino and that of Ampugnano. This part of Corsica is fertile and richly wooded; the chestnut-trees especially are very fine, and furnish a large portion of the people's food. Orezza is celebrated for its mineral waters. Its inhabitants are the most industrious in Corsica; it is the only part where there are any manufactories.* After staying one day at Orezza, and

* Tan-yards and manufactories of wooden utensils. In the stream flowing just below the village are rocks which contain the jasper known as *Vert de Corse*.

inspecting the hospital I had established for the soldiers sent there for the mineral baths, I proceeded to Cervione, the chief town of the Canton of Campoloro.

On this excursion to the centre of Corsica, which I had not visited during my first mission, I was in general well received by the inhabitants, and allowing for what was merely formal and for the flattery usually offered to official personages, I thought I could detect some signs of real affection for me on the part of the people. A curious fête that was given in my honour at Cervione contributed perhaps to impress me with this conviction. Fêtes of this kind are peculiar to that part of the country ; the inhabitants take great delight in them, but they occur only on extraordinary occasions of public rejoicing.

These fêtes are called *Morescas*. The remembrance of the wars between the Corsicans and the Moors, who formerly devastated the country and forced the inhabitants to remove their villages from the plain to the mountains, was probably the origin of a kind of dramatic representation of the events of that warfare. The very derivation of the name justifies this supposition, and as the details of the spectacle are rather curious, I shall pause a moment here, to recall them.

The conquest of Jerusalem had been chosen as the

subject of the Moresca that was represented in my honour, and Tasso's poem was its framework.

The scene of the Moresca had been skilfully selected. At a short distance from Cervione was a hill whose gentle slope formed a natural amphitheatre, and commanded the space where the piece was to be represented. On this hill were the spectators. Opposite, to the east, was a view of the sea.

On a wide esplanade below the hill there was on one side a camp composed of several tents, and on the other the representation of the city of Jerusalem. The camp was occupied by the French, the city by Turks. Godfrey's tent and the interior of Aladdin's palace were so arranged that the spectators could see and hear all that took place in one or the other. The space between the city and the camp was the scene of the various combats and other events that were successively represented.

To the left of the camp was a wooden tower constructed by the Christians to batter the town.

The drama opened with a prologue, well and feelingly recited by one of the actors. It described the subject of the play and the arrangement of the stage. This prologue was quite in the style of Greek tragedy.

Then the drama began, and the whole of Tasso's poem, from the appearance of the Angel to Godfrey, to the assault made on Jerusalem, was put on the

stage, with the exception only of the episode of Armida, which was suppressed. But that of Olindo and Sofronia, the burning of the tower by Argando and Clorinda, the death of the female warrior, the adventures of Erminia and the embassy of Alete and Argando were represented. The dialogue, in the purest Italian, was animated and, on the whole, well rendered by the actors. Some verses of Tasso had been added, but not many. The costumes were accurate, the Christians could be easily distinguished from the Moors; the former wore the costume of our ancient paladins and were arrayed entirely in white; the Moors wore the Asiatic dress, red, yellow and green being the predominating colours.

The performance lasted nearly four hours. The piece was listened to in profound silence, only broken by the applause of an immense and attentive crowd assembled from the neighbouring cantons. The subject seemed familiar to all the spectators, and was thoroughly appreciated throughout. The whole was conducted with the greatest decorum and quietness.

Two days afterwards I started on my return journey to Bastia, where I arrived on the 20th Fructidor, and where I passed the last days of year IX.

In the course of the last month of year X. (October 1801) I learned that preliminaries of peace

with England had been signed; I at once sent my brother, Jacques Miot, to convey the news to the English station at the Piombino Canal, in order to procure a cessation of hostilities. My message was well received, and I took advantage of the opening of communications with Italy to provide for the necessities of the island. We were threatened with an extreme scarcity of grain, and that greatly increased the difficulties of my position. Lastly, after taking the needful steps for the safety and victualling of the department of Golo, I left Bastia on the 29th Brumaire (November 20), to return to Liamone and establish myself once more at Ajaccio.

I found this part of the island perfectly tranquil. Order was being re-established on every side, and since the departure of General Muller the harmony between the military authority and my own had not been disturbed. I might therefore have reckoned on a more successful issue to my mission than I had dared to hope for, if obstacles arising in Paris had not been thrown in the way of my most desirable measures. My life was passed in perpetual conflict, and I spent more time in defending myself against attacks from without than I required to devote to all the details of internal administration.

About four months after my return to Liamone I learned two pieces of news equally important, although of a very different kind. The one an-

nounced the conclusion of a definitive peace with England, signed at Amiens on 4th Germinal, year X. (March 25, 1802); the other, the adoption of a law to restore public worship, framed in conformity with the Concordat concluded between the French Republic and the Holy See.* The first event caused me unmixed joy; not so the second. In proportion as religious tolerance and liberty for each individual to worship the Divinity in his own way was a gain, did the renewal of the former relations with Rome, the recognition of a foreign arbiter in matters of faith, and above all, the pomp with which the Government celebrated this return to former things, seem to me matter for alarm to men of clear judgment, who dreaded, as one of the greatest scourges that can afflict a nation, the readmission of religion and the ministers of religion into the political order. It was, indeed, easy to foresee that all the power of Bonaparte would not suffice to keep the dangerous auxiliaries he was accepting within the narrow bounds to which he believed he was restricting them, and the result has proved that when reverses came upon him he had no more implacable enemies than those priests to whom he had restored so dangerous

* The Concordat had been signed in Paris, on July 15, 1801, and ratified by the Pope on the 16th of August. The organic laws of the Concordat adopted by the Tribunate and the Legislative Body are of the 16th Germinal, year X. (April 6, 1802).

an influence over society. But at the time when Bonaparte took this perilous step, he was convinced that of all religions the Catholic was that most favourable to the arbitrary power to which he aspired, and that in the pulpit and the confessional he should find powerful defenders of his system, and teachers of a passive obedience to his advantage. He shut his eyes, therefore, to all other considerations, and looked on the restoration of religion as a necessary step for reaching supreme authority. He failed to attach an ungrateful clergy to himself, while he alienated many adherents, and though I was stationed at a very isolated point, I had ample means of convincing myself of these truths. Notwithstanding the attachment of the Corsicans in general to the Catholic Faith, its unexpected restoration in France caused very little sensation in the island. The ceremonial with which I had the new law promulgated, the *Te Deum* and solemn masses, produced but small effect. The keen instinct of the Corsicans led them to divine that this proceeding of the First Consul was not to be attributed to an intimate conviction of the excellence of Catholicity, but to designs of greater depth. Thus my position was not altered, either for the better or for the worse, by an event which had such importance in the interior of France.

In fact I soon discovered that Corsica was a

country in which Bonaparte, although born there, would have met with the most unwilling acquiescence in the executions of his plans, and had all the departments of France been animated with the same spirit as Golo and Liamone, his rapid elevation might have encountered greater obstacles. When the decision of the Second and Third Consuls, that the people should be consulted on the question, "Shall Napoleon Bonaparte be Consul for life?" reached me, I hastened to proclaim it, and to open registries where every inhabitant was to record his vote. But my proclamation awakened no enthusiastic feeling in Corsica in favour of so illustrious a compatriot. With the exception of the public officials, whose vote was obligatory, very little eagerness was shown, and the registers were filled up but slowly. There was even a considerable number of votes in the negative. I will quote a rather remarkable example; the following vote was given by one of the inhabitants of Golo.

"Roma non accordava che un' anno al Consolato. Dopo Cromwell successe il figlio di Carlo I., e si vendicò. Si domanda la carica a vita oggi, domani ereditaria."*

* "Rome granted one year of Consulship only. After Cromwell, the son of Charles I. succeeded, and avenged him. To-day it is duration for life that is demanded, to-morrow it will be heredity."

Among the military there were also many negative votes. At Ajaccio, where the garrison consisted of 300 men, 66 voted "No;" and among a company of 50 artillerymen, 38 voted against the proposal.

Amid the mental agitation into which I was thrown by the great changes occurring in our institutions and by the anticipation of further change, I was forcibly recalled to the duties of my office. The general state of the country had become satisfactory, and no longer caused me anxiety. General Morand, who had been appointed by the First Consul to replace Muller, had arrived, and we got on well together. A new Commissioner assisted me in my endeavours to restore order in the Finance Department, and to put a stop to scandalous extortions. My position was improved, yet I was not so well satisfied with it as not to desire a change. In proportion as Corsica became tranquillised, I solicited my recall with greater persistency, and I tried to convince the First Consul that the extraordinary powers which had been confided to me were no longer necessary. But my representations failed, and I learned from my friends in Paris that there was not the least intention of recalling me to France. Having lost all hope, therefore, of escorting my family thither in person, I decided on sending my wife and children without me. The necessity of educating my children

forbade me to keep them any longer in a country where the means of instruction was lacking, and I parted from them and from my wife on the 14th Messidor (July 3). I then left Ajaccio in order to take up my residence in the highlands, at Bogognano,* about ten miles from the town, where, without detriment to the despatch of public business, I might breathe better air than in Ajaccio. That town is almost uninhabitable in summer. During my stay in these mountains I made a second excursion for the purpose of exploring Monte d'Oro.

EXCURSION TO MONTE D'ORO.

On the 10th Thermidor (July 29) at 9 A.M. we left† Bogognano, and took the high road from Ajaccio to Corta as far as the Foce di Guizzavona, where we left our horses, as we could make no use of them for the remainder of our journey. At 3 P.M. we began by climbing a very steep incline to the west of the tower of La Foce. The slope, which is rich in pasture-land, bears the name of *Vaccaria*—(a place for cows). Large numbers

* This name is given to a group of villages, situated about three hundred fathoms above the level of the sea, on the ridge of the mountains, south of the Col de la Foce di Guizzavona.

† I was accompanied on this excursion by MM. Demy and Laroche, members of my administration, by two shepherds who acted as guides, and by two servants.

of these animals under the care of their herdsmen occupy the grazing land in summer.

On reaching the top of the incline, we had a view of Monte d'Oro, from which we were separated by a valley of considerable width, watered by one of the sources of the Vecchio; the latter flows into the Tavignano below Corta.* The valley is shut in on the south by a wide col, much higher than the summit of the incline where we were standing. Our route lay towards the col, in order afterwards to reach the top of the mountain. We therefore began our descent into the valley, and then followed the course of the torrent, against stream, until we reached a sheepfold called the *Posatoja*. When there, we were not far from the snows that cover the narrow valleys, and when they melt, give birth to streams that flow in various directions from the col, and from the mountain itself. The soil on which we had walked since leaving the summit of the *Vaccaria* consists entirely of fragments of the neighbouring mountains, whose antiquity is proved by the dry and isolated fissures in them.

The summits of these mountains are studded with

* The Vecchio, as I have already said, takes its rise in the lake of Monte-Rotondo; but it receives a tributary in the waters flowing to the east of Monte d'Oro. Those flowing to the west and south enter the Liamone and the Gravone.

sharp pinnacles of varied height and eccentric form. They are known to the shepherds by various names, such as the *Frate*, the *Capuccino*, &c. Their broken fragments, over which we wended our way, consist generally of quartz, steatite, feldspar, and mica. The mixture of these four substances produces various combinations, some of which are remarkably brilliant. Rock crystals are also met with in the fissures of the granite, and especially in a steep, narrow valley rising from north to south almost to the top of Monte d'Oro, and which bears the name of *Canale del cristallo*. At the time I speak of it was full of snow and quite unapproachable. The shepherds can only enter it in September, where they find crystals of a fair size, which they sell in the towns. The vegetation of the valley we had traversed in order to reach the *Posatoja* is very fine. Beech-trees and some varieties of pine attain a great height.

We passed part of the night at the sheepfolds of *Posatoja*. The cold was bitter. At 2 A.M. we resumed our journey by the light of torches of a resinous wood, the *Pinus pinaster*, and commenced the ascent of the col which closes in the valley that we had traversed the day before. We reached its summit at 4 A.M. Vegetation had ceased, and according to my calculation we were at a height of about 1800 yards above the level of

the sea. The path was becoming very difficult, on account of the loose stones which rolled about under our feet. We kept as much as possible at the top of the col, in order to reach the eastern ridge of Monte d'Oro, which we climbed by making our way round it spirally. After a fatiguing march of three-quarters of an hour, we found ourselves separated from the summit of the mountain only by a mass of rock, which stood out in an almost hemispheric shape. Our difficulties now increased. In certain spots we were obliged to allow ourselves to be carried on the shoulders of our guides. Lastly, after much labour, four of us, including myself, stood on the highest point of all. The others had dropped behind at places more or less distant from our journey's end.

It was 5.30 A.M. when we found ourselves on the top of Monte d'Oro. The sun was beginning to shine on one of the fairest scenes of nature, which although greatly resembling that I had beheld a year before at Monte-Rotondo, was not the less impressive. The whole of Corsica and all its mountains lay at our feet, with the exception of Monte-Rotondo, whose superior height was scarcely perceptible, of Monte Cinto and the peak of Orezza at the same height as ourselves. Beyond this group

* The difference in height between Monte-Rotondo and Monte d'Oro is but twenty yards.

of mountains piled up, so to speak, one on the other, I descried on the east the plains of Aleria and Fiumorbo, the pools of Urbino and Diana, the course of the Tavignano, then the sea, the islands of Monte-Cristo and Elba, the coast of Italy, Montenero and the Maremma of Tuscany; on the north the island of Capraja, and in the background the Apennines of the Genoa Riviera; on the west the barren mountains of the Niolo, the sea of France and the coasts of my native land. Towards the south I could perceive the Gulfs of Sagona, of Ajaccio, of Valinco, the island of Asinara, and Sardinia hanging over the sea like a huge cloud.

After enjoying this delightful landscape for some time, I employed myself in an examination of the spot on which I stood, and of the configuration of the mountain.

Monte d'Oro much resembles Monte-Rotondo in shape, that is to say, it also is like an amphitheatre, of which the arena is formed by a lake about a hundred fathoms in diameter. But the destruction of the walls is much more advanced, and the landslips are more considerable than at Monte-Rotondo. Towards the west and south, in fact, these walls are almost entirely destroyed; only a few low peaks are standing, where tops are already crumbling away, and which exist but as witnesses to the

ancient shape of the mountain. Our own standpoint was on one of these pinnacles, higher than the others and composed of fragments of broken rock, heaped up and evidently broken off from some higher pinnacle which has entirely disappeared. All these fragments are of the same nature as those we saw in the valleys or on the lower cols; there is no sign of volcanic or calcareous origin, no trace of shells, nor any mark of the former presence of water nor of the action of fire, but everywhere an appearance of decay and decrepitude; no fertile earth, unless such as is brought by the winds, and collected in the fissures of the rock, where it is increased by the decay of the vegetable growths that it supports. The height of Monte d'Oro is estimated in the 'Annuaire du Bureau des Longitudes' at 2652 yards. At the top of the mountain the temperature was cold, but not unbearably so; but respiration was rather difficult. A great part of the lake was still frozen, and the ice covered with snow.*

The only inhabitant of these wild regions is the moufflon or musmon (*Ovis Ammon*). We saw several

* There had been no ice the previous year at Monte-Rotondo, although it is higher, but we made our excursion thither at the end of August, and it seems that at that season only the snow disappears. It lies all the year through on the north side of Monte d'Oro, on account of its particular shape and the depth of its crevasses.

of them skipping along and bounding over precipices with wonderful agility. In such elevated regions these animals feed principally on the sheep-plantain (*Plantago ovina*), which grows abundantly between the stones, and which the shepherds have named *Erba muffrina*. The vegetable products are much the same as those I remarked on Monte-Rotondo, and I recognised with pleasure the *Xeranthemum frigidum* creeping over the rocks at the foot of Monte d'Oro.

We took the same path for our return that we had taken to ascend the mountain, and reached the Posatoja before noon. At 4 o'clock we arrived at the Foce di Guizzavona, where our horses were in waiting for us, and we were back at Bogognano the same day, the 11th Thermidor, at 8 P.M.

Immediately on my return from this excursion, one of the most interesting that I made in Corsica, I received the Senatus-Consultum of the 14th and 17th Thermidor, conferring on the First Consul power for life, and modifying various parts of the Constitution of year VIII. These were the preludes to greater changes, already under consideration, but which it was not as yet safe to attempt, so hazardous was the word 'heredity,' and heredity alone was wanting to complete the conversion of the Republic into a Monarchy. I made solemn proclamation of these new decrees; a popular fête was held at Ajaccio; I

gave a ball and all went off decorously, but the public displayed neither joy nor satisfaction. There was, on the whole, more surprise than enthusiasm. People knew not how to reconcile this surprising rise with their still recent recollections of Bonaparte's family, whom all the inhabitants of Ajaccio had known in a rank so far removed from their present greatness. The old proverb, "No man is a prophet in his own country," appeared to me in this case to receive a fresh confirmation. But at the same time the feelings of envy that were exhibited in Napoleon's own country * at the very time when his fortune was so greatly in the ascendant, gave me opportunities of acquiring some information on the origin of his family, and I did not neglect them. I will set down in this place the results of my inquiries, made in the very birthplace of Napoleon, among his own countrymen and either rivals or friends of his family.

The Bonapartes descend from a noble Florentine family. During the troublous times of the Republic one of their ancestors withdrew to San Miniato,† a

* The name of Napoleon, which is a common baptismal name in Corsica, appeared for the first time in the *Senatus-Consultum* of the 14th Thermidor.

† One Jacopo Buonaparte wrote an account of the sack of Rome in 1527. He was present, and collected the particulars day by day. On the title page of his book, which was published at Cologne in 1756, he is described as *Gentiluomo Samminiatese*.

small town ten leagues from Florence. The last descendant of this branch of the family was a Canon, who was still living at San Miniato, and whom Bonaparte visited when, in year IV., he went to Florence.

Another Bonaparte settled at Sarzano in the State of Genoa, and from this branch proceed the Bonapartes of Ajaccio. They possessed some landed property there, and have always been regarded as distinguished both by birth and fortune. Many years after the union of Corsica with France, which took place in 1769, Charles Bonaparte was sent to Paris; as deputy from the nobles, and one of his daughters, Elisa Bonaparte, was educated at St. Cyr, which leaves no doubt as to their noble birth. M. Charles Bonaparte was a very handsome man. He died at Montpellier in 1785, after a singular illness, of which I have already spoken.

As to the women; the mother of the First Consul, Madame Lætitia Bonaparte, whose beauty was most remarkable, is a Ramolino, a family of Ajaccio, which claims to be connected with the Ornanos, although it is not considered to be noble. The mother of Madame Lætitia Bonaparte was by birth a Pietra-Santa, a family of very moderate rank at Sarteno. On the death of Ramolino, her first husband, she had married a Swiss, named Fesch, whose family held an honourable position at Bâle,

where they were established as bankers. By her second marriage she had one son, at that time Archbishop of Lyons and afterwards Cardinal, and consequently step-brother of Madame Lætitia Bonaparte, and uncle on the mother's side of the First Consul and of his brothers and sisters. One of Madame Lætitia's sisters had married a Paravicini, who, during my residence in Corsica, was Commissioner for the Navy at Ajaccio, and was, on the female side, uncle by marriage to Napoleon. Lastly, the son of one of Madame Lætitia's brothers was at the period of which I speak director of the public taxes. He was first cousin to Napoloon. This Ramolino was afterwards member of the Chamber of Deputies in 1822 and 1823.

After the fêtes at Ajaccio in honour of the Life-Consulship and of the new institutions that the Senatus-Consultum of the 14th and 17th Thermidor had introduced in France, I returned to Bogognano, to remain there during the rest of the hot season. I had resigned myself at last to the continued exercise of the laborious duties of my office, for the Paris authorities had refused to grant me even the short holiday I had applied for. But at the very moment that I gave up all hope of returning to France, an unexpected incident recalled me thither. In a report of the Minister of Finance on the measures I had taken relative to taxation in certain

cantons, in which I had remitted arrears that they were unable to pay, those measures were represented as an excessive encroachment on the powers delegated to me, and the First Consul was induced to bring my mission to a close. He replaced the two departments of Corsica under the rule of the Constitution on the 1st Brumaire, year XI. (Oct. 23, 1802). Thus from a moment's ill-humour I obtained what had been denied to my most pressing entreaties. At the first news of a determination so ardently desired by me, I hastened to put all the affairs of my administration in order, and to make preparations for my journey.

Before taking a final leave of Corsica, I shall give a sketch of the state of the island at the time of my departure.

On my arrival there in the month of Germinal, year IX., I had found part of Corsica in a condition of internal disturbance, and the roads infested by men who, having incurred the penalties of the law, had sought safety in the mountains and who fell suddenly on travellers or solitary soldiers. I left the country tranquil, its roads safe, and means of communication restored. The Extraordinary Criminal Tribunal that I had established had answered my expectations. Offences against the laws had been repressed or punished. There was entire confidence in the administration, for its impartiality was

well known. But this very impartiality had injured many private interests, and had raised up enemies for me who were sufficiently powerful to create serious difficulties. I had been driven to take extraordinary proceedings against the General in command of the Division, and the progress of improvement had been partly obstructed. However, taking things on the whole, the state of the country was ameliorated. But in order that the small amount of good I had been able to effect, might become consolidated and might penetrate the mass of the people and affect their customs, time and perseverance in the use of similar means were needed. In that respect, therefore, I must own that I left Corsica in the same state in which I had found it on both my missions there. Civilisation had made no perceptible progress.* The same spirit of revenge and personal enmity prevailed. I had often been obliged to summon the chiefs of families divided by hereditary feuds into my presence, and to act as arbitrator, in order to establish a kind

* The following affords a proof of this. The road-making I had undertaken in Corsica was undoubtedly a great benefit to the inhabitants, who were employed on the works and were well paid. The engineer at the head of the works in the neighbourhood of Bogognano had sent to Ajaccio for wheels on which to remove the beams intended for the construction of a bridge. These wheels were left in the road, and during the night the workmen set fire to the wooden spokes in order to get the iron, which they carried off and hid in the mountains. Does not this read like an anecdote of South-Sea savages?

of treaty of peace between them, and I had not always succeeded. Acts of private vengeance had been perpetrated more than once, under my very eyes, and in spite of all my endeavours I was powerless to punish such crimes. I will give an instance of this, so as to afford some idea of the vindictive spirit of the inhabitants, and of the light in which they themselves regarded such acts.

On the day of my arrival at Bogognano, 17th Mesidor, year IX., a private *vendetta* cost two men their lives. About eight years previously an inhabitant of that canton had killed one of his neighbours, the father of two children. When these children had reached their sixteenth or seventeenth year, and were consequently of an age to avenge their father, they left their own part of the country to watch for the murderer, who was on his guard and dared not venture far from the village.

A few days before my arrival they had been seen in the neighbourhood, and on the very day of my arrival at Bogognano, they had come upon their enemy playing at cards under a tree, at a short distance from the house in which I intended taking up my residence. The youths fired four times and killed their man, but one shot struck and killed another man, who was sleeping a few yards away. The latter was a near kinsman of the young brothers, who, after committing the deed,

disappeared, no one making any attempt to secure them.

This tragedy made no sensation whatever in the country. The inhabitants, in fact, appeared pleased rather than shocked by it. They told me that it was fortunately the last *vendetta* due in Bogognano, and that now that it had been accomplished, there was no fear of further disturbance to their tranquillity. The families on both sides considered the reprisal just and according to rule, and no one interfered.* The women took possession of their

* The degree of kindred in which the vendetta is of obligation is regulated by ancient customs, and there are instances of discussions on the point between two individuals belonging to families at variance with each other, which have ended in a friendly manner when one has been able to prove to the other that he was not within the degree of kindred in which legitimate vengeance could be taken. In addition to the sanguinary code on the subject, there is a curious feeling of respect for religious prejudices. I am indebted to M. Galeazzini, Prefect of Liamone, for a remarkable anecdote bearing on this subject. An inhabitant of the village of Peri comes across a kinsman of one of his enemies, engaged in digging in his field. He thinks the opportunity a favourable one, and, raising his gun, he calls out to his man, "Now then, say your *In manus!* I must kill you!" "No," replies the other, "I will not say it; you have no right to kill me, I am not your enemy." And they begin to discuss the degree of relationship. At last, the inhabitant of Peri, seeing that he cannot induce his adversary to say his *In manus*, lowers his gun and departs, willing rather to miss an opportunity of revenge than to commit a mortal sin by killing a man not within the prescribed degrees, and who had not said his prayers.

dead, wept over them, buried them according to the custom of the country, and there was an end of it.*

Nevertheless I wrote on that same day to Ajaccio, and gave the most stringent orders for the pursuit of the two murderers; but all my endeavours to find them were in vain, and I thus became convinced of my powerlessness to remedy an evil which was continually strengthened by the strongest prejudices, and by a deeply rooted though mistaken point of honour. What can be done, what can be attempted with men who gladly incur certain death in order to carry out a *vendetta*, in their eyes not only a righteous one; but a duty from which the lapse of twenty or even of fifty years does not free them, and also a debt to be handed down from generation to generation? What argument will avail with these men of passionate nature, who look daily into the chest that contains their clothes at the blood-stained handkerchief of him whom they are destined to avenge? This silent but ever-present proof of

* The women of Bogognano watched the corpses all night, uttering the most doleful wailings. They followed them the next morning to the cemetery, walking two and two, and rending the air with their lamentations. All wore veils of blue stuff, called *veleri*, which is worn as a petticoat and then brought over the head. Some men supported those whose grief appeared the deepest, but with an air of indifference that made the whole thing seem acting or, at least, a vain ceremony.

the murder, which it is their duty to punish, is a terrible witness not to be removed until vengeance is accomplished! What can be done with men who from childhood have accustomed themselves to the use of firearms, only for the sake of possessing an unfailing means of keeping the oath they have sworn to their mother, to follow to the death the enemy who made her a widow and her children orphans.* The spread of education, an increase of population protected by salutary laws, the introduction of civilisation into the interior, speedy justice, an impartial Government, and, above all, Time itself, can alone alter these barbarous customs. Very few of those means were at my command, and during the course of my mission, I had the pain of witnessing the evil without having the

* Corsicans are very expert in the use of firearms, and have a kind of veneration for a first-rate shot. The following anecdote was related to me; if it be true—and I cannot vouch for it—it would show to what an extent Corsicans carry their admiration for that accomplishment. A man is informed that one of his sons has just been assassinated, in consequence of a family feud. He proceeds to the spot and recognises his son. But on examining the body he perceives that the three balls with which the gun was loaded have all entered the heart. Every other feeling yields to admiration for such supreme skill, and he exclaims enthusiastically, "*Ma vedete, che gran colpo!*" These are almost the words of Prexaspes to Cambyzes in Herodotus. "My lord, the god himself would not have aimed so true!"

! "But see! what a grand shot!"

power to eradicate it. It was with satisfaction, therefore, that I took leave of a country where it was so difficult to do good and so easy to do evil.

Before embarking, I once more visited the beautiful mountains of *Foce di Guizzavona*, and those in the neighbourhood of Bogognano, which I had already explored with great interest. During this final excursion I enjoyed the spectacle of a storm, whose splendour has remained graven on my memory as a solemn token of farewell from those wild regions. I returned late in the evening to Bogognano, and proceeded next day to Ajaccio, where I embarked for Marseilles.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Author returns to Paris—His reception by the First Consul—Monarchical customs and strict etiquette with which the First Consul surrounded himself—Joseph Bonaparte imparts the secret designs and great projects of the First Consul to the Author—Lord Whitworth, the English Ambassador in Paris—General Moreau is fêted at the Ministry of War—Government-mourning on the occasion of the death of General Leclerc—New coinage with the effigy of the First Consul—Lavish endowment of the Senate—The political relations between France and England become strained—Irritation of the First Consul with the English Press—Conversation between Bonaparte and Lord Whitworth—Colonel Sebastiani's Report, published in the *Moniteur*—The King's speech to Parliament is hostile to France—Effect produced by it in Paris—Progress of the crisis and of the negotiations, official and secret, prior to the definitive rupture between France and England—Simultaneous departure of Lord Whitworth from Paris and of General Andreossy from London—Appendix: Lord Whitworth's Despatch of February 21, 1803, to Lord Hawkesbury.

I EMBARKED, on the 2nd Brumaire, year XI. (October 24, 1802), on board *La Fortune*, Captain Riouffe. Contrary winds obliged us to anchor first at the

Isle of Porteros, one of the Hyères, where I stayed two days ; and afterwards at Ciotat, a small town in the Department of Var. The bad weather continued, and prevented our voyage by sea, so I resolved on proceeding to Marseilles by land. I arrived there on the 9th Brumaire (October 31), remained two days, waiting for my luggage, which I had left on board at Ciotat, and reached Paris on the 21st Brumaire (November 12).

It was not altogether without apprehension that I found myself once more in the capital. The intrigues against me during the course of my mission, and the somewhat sudden recall that had brought it to a close, made me anticipate an unfavourable reception. But it was not so. Joseph Bonaparte, whom I saw first, welcomed me most cordially. Not only was he free from the prejudices against me which various members of his family had manifested, but he had always warmly defended my motives and my conduct. He reassured me as to the feelings of the First Consul, who, he undertook to say, had more correctly than any other person appreciated the difficulties of my position, and whom I should find quite satisfied with my discharge of its duties.

Bonaparte was absent at the time of my arrival in Paris, and he did not return to St. Cloud, his habitual residence in autumn, until the 22nd

Brumaire (November 13).^{*} The following day at noon he received the Council of State, and I joined my colleagues in order to be present at that audience. His first words were pleasant. He told me, jestingly, that I had got into trouble with the Ministers; that Ministers did not like Administrators-General who acted on their own ideas, and that I must make it up with them. When he had finished, and heard what I had to say in reply, I approached the Ministers who were present, and remarked with pleasure that the favourable reception just accorded to me by the great man had already half-effected our reconciliation. Hands were stretched out to me, I was embraced, and I might believe myself restored to favour. Another and more serious conversation on the mission I had just accomplished, and on Corsica generally, ensued. Some points of my conduct were discussed; the First Consul asserted that I had been too kind, that I had leaned too much to conciliation, and that a little severity would have done better. On the whole, he did justice to my intentions, and to the principles of equity and impartiality on which I had acted. In short, I had every reason to be pleased; and, indeed, to be reproached with an excess of kindness and moderation in the exercise of an administration for which I had

^{*} He had been inspecting the Seine Inférieure and Calvados, and the sea-coasts of those two departments.

received such elastic powers, was praise rather than criticism. The Consuls informed me that I was to return to the Council of State in the Section of the Interior, and as that was the sole reward I coveted, I had nothing more to ask for.

I was now at ease concerning my own future, and I began to look about me, and to observe the new aspect of things with astonishment. What changes during an absence of less than two years! Monarchical customs, which were beginning to appear when I left Paris, had extended in every direction, and what little had remained of austere Republican forms at the time of my departure from the capital had now entirely disappeared. Gorgeous liveries, sumptuous garments, similar to those worn in the reign of Louis XV., had succeeded to the military fashions, which, during the Revolution, had been adopted even in the dress of civilians. No more boots, sabres, or cockades, these were replaced by tights and silk stockings, buckled-shoes, dress-swords, and hats held under the arm. All this, however, was as in an early stage, and the awkwardness of some persons not yet accustomed to these Court fashions, together with certain oddities in the dress of others, who still retained traces of the fashions they had just given up, formed an extraordinary spectacle. I was not more free from incongruity than others, and my coat, with turned-

back facings, worn with white silk stockings and a sword, shocked the educated taste of several of my colleagues whose costumes did not offer a similar contrast. Fortunately I was not singular in my offence, the First Consul was equally subject to criticism. With a superb coat of violet velvet, magnificently embroidered in gold and silk, he wore a sword, white silk stockings, gold buckles in his shoes, and a *black cravat*! This was certainly a serious blunder in dress! *

The change was still more apparent in the reality of things than in their outward appearance. The Tuileries and St. Cloud were no longer, as I had left them, the seat of Government, the abode of the first Magistrate of a Republic, but the Court of a Sovereign. Severe etiquette prevailed there; officers attached to the person, prescribed honours paid to the ladies, a privileged family; in short, everything except the name of *Consul* was monarchical, and that name was destined soon to disappear.

The first impression made on me by this novel pomp and display was disagreeable and painful. No one could be more convinced than I of the necessity of surrounding the Government of a great nation with dignity, and even, if desired, with

* Bonaparte rarely wore a civilian costume, he appeared generally in the uniform of a Colonel of Grenadiers, or of the Guard's light infantry. I have several times seen him preside at the Council of State in the uniform of a Councillor.

a certain magnificence, but I should have wished to discern the Government through all this splendour, and not an individual, still less his family. Among all that I saw and remarked at that time, the visit of the great bodies of the State and of the ambassadors to Madame Bonaparte impressed me most. I had presented myself with the other State Councillors. She rose to receive us, remained standing during the address of our President, thanked us for the sentiments expressed by the Council of State, then seating herself without inviting us to do the same, carried on a conversation on ordinary topics for a short time, after which she again rose and dismissed us.

A few days later I returned to St. Cloud to be present at the audience given every Sunday by the First Consul, or, to speak more accurately, I returned thither to pay my court. I found the members of the principal bodies of the State, and the Tribunals, Generals, Ministers, and Bishops ranged in a line in the great gallery. The First Consul passed through, accompanied by his wife, by some members of his family, by the other two Consuls, and by his civil and military officers, on his way to a sung mass.* On his return, he paused in the

* Although the ancient Gregorian Calendar was not yet restored, Sunday was religiously observed after the re-establishment of Divine worship.

gallery, spoke to a great many persons, received petitions, and then withdrew to his private apartments. All was regulated by the most punctilious etiquette, and the Second and Third Consuls were as subservient to it as the rest of the crowd; they were present in the gallery, not as colleagues of the First Consul, but as courtiers. They had no distinguishing suite, and could only be recognised by their dress; whereas Bonaparte, surrounded by aides-de-camp, by Prefects of the Palace, and officers of his guard, occupied the principal position. Thus the slight semblance of divided authority had already almost entirely disappeared, and those very men who, at first, had been called to a share in it, were now consenting to reduce that share, externally at least, to nothing.

But I have said enough on this subject. I have pointed out the decisive steps that the First Consul had taken during my absence towards the end which he soon afterwards attained, and I have also recorded the docility with which the public lent themselves to his purposes.

On my return from Corsica, my former intimacy with Joseph Bonaparte became yet closer, and from that period dates the confidence he has never ceased to repose in me and the friendship which still exists between us, notwithstanding the distance that divides us. To that friendship, to that confidence,

I owe my acquaintance with many secret facts which throw a strong light on the hidden springs that worked that marvellous drama, so ephemeral when compared with its grandeur, of which astonished Europe was for twelve years the silent spectator. The greater part of what I am about to relate had its origin in my almost daily interviews at this period with Joseph Bonaparte. The lapse of years, and the rapid fall of the Man who created and then destroyed his own power, bring back many details into the domain of History that have ceased to be secrets; I give these particulars, therefore, without fear of misconstruction of my motive.

My earlier conversations with Joseph Bonaparte turned at first on his own position, and afterwards led to an exposition of the projects then entertained by the First Consul. As it is easy to trace the plans he had formed, the means which he proposed to himself to employ, and the reflections which such bold designs called up in our minds, I will simply transcribe the *résumé* of these conversations made in my note-book on the very days on which they were held.

After expressing to Joseph Bonaparte my surprise at the position* in which I found him, I said, "I had expected to see you invested with greater

* Joseph Bonaparte was at that time simply a senator.

power and influence. I thought that you would have aspired to personal distinction. And, in fact, since the First Consul allows and even exacts such distinction for his wife, it follows that the members of his family, and especially his brothers, should enjoy it also. Yet I find you without rank, without an establishment, and without followers. The life-appointment of the Second and Third Consuls* is an act of hostility to you. It gives them a present position which you have not, and will secure to them, at the death of your brother, a possibility which should always be in your mind, influence that you might then seek in vain to obtain, and that you might bitterly regret not having secured. It is time, I think, for you to rouse yourself from this condition of insignificance, whatever may be its charm. As no successor to the First Consul can possibly feel himself secure so long as you and Lucien are in existence, nor would leave you in peace at Morfontaine, you ought, betimes, to prepare yourself to take the lead, since on your brother's death there could be no middle course for you between supreme power and nothingness."

"You argue rightly," replied Joseph Bonaparte, "but like every one else who judges me, you start from a false premiss. You take for granted that

* The three Consuls had been appointed for life by the *Senatus-Consultum* of 17th Thermidor, year X.

the small influence I exercise and the obscurity of the part I play are due only to my indolent nature, and that I have but to overcome that, to attain to the place which, according to you, I ought to occupy. Undeceive yourself; I perfectly understand all the advantages I should reap by a different position, and if it only depended on me to make the change, I should certainly do it. But you do not understand my brother. The idea of sharing his power is so obnoxious to him, that my claims are as suspicious in his eyes as those of any other person, more so, perhaps, since they are the most plausible of any, and would be most readily justified by public opinion. He desires above all that the need of his own existence should be so deeply felt, and recognised as so great a benefit, that none can look beyond it without trepidation. He knows and feels that he reigns rather through this idea than through either force or gratitude. If to-morrow or on any other day people were to say to themselves, "Here is a stable and quiet order of things! and a successor who will maintain it for us is designated; Bonaparte may die, we have neither change nor disturbance to fear,"—my brother would no longer think himself safe. I have discovered that such is his feeling, and he rules his conduct by it. Can you believe, after this, that he would suffer me to carry out the plan you advise? and do you think

that I should be strong enough to follow it against his consent? Certainly not! Thus as it is impossible for me to reach the point I ought to attain, I prefer playing no part at all to undertaking an inferior one. My policy is to obtain praise for the moderation of my desires, for my philosophy, my love of repose and tranquil pleasures, and to make all the world believe, as you believed a moment ago, not that I cannot be, but that I do not choose to be more than I am at present."

"I should have nothing to reply to what you have just told me," I answered, "if you really are on these terms with your brother. But are you not deceiving me in this, are you not trying to disguise the true motives of your conduct, in order to escape the blame you would deserve if you are acting only from indolence and indifference? How can you reconcile what you have just told me concerning the First Consul with his special marks of regard when you returned from Amiens,* putting you forward to be applauded by the public at the Opera, and offering you a place of honour at the Fête of the Concordat,† favours which for the most part you refused?"

* Joseph Bonaparte had signed the treaty of peace with England at Amiens.

† This religious fête had been celebrated at Notre Dame on 27th Thermidor, year X. (August 15, 1802). It had been decided that Joseph Bonaparte was to proceed to Notre Dame in a carriage drawn by eight horses; but he declined that honour, and went with the other Councillors of State.

“ You are under the same mistake as before,” said Joseph Bonaparte ; “ you persist in believing that these honours and distinctions were offered to me in good faith. I am certain they were only a snare, and I was bound to avoid that. What was the aim of the First Consul ? To make me a mark for the envy and jealousy of the other Consuls, of the Ministers, and of the Councillors of State, without affording me any means of setting their enmity at defiance, while at the same time he paid his debt to me. Should I, in fact, have had any right to complain after receiving marks of favour which made me, as it were, his designated successor ? Might not my brother have said, ‘ What more does he want ? Could I have done more for him ? Is it my fault that he cannot keep himself where I have placed him ? ’ I should thus have forfeited all the respect I have won by my simple and moderate behaviour, without having acquired more positive power and without escaping, perhaps, from the ridicule which attaches to every man who displays a great ambition and does not justify it by his abilities. Had the First Consul sincerely desired my advancement, he would have taken the opportunity of promoting it on the occasion of the appointment of a President to the Italian Republic.* True, he offered me that

* The Cisalpine Republic had taken that name in the *Senatus-Consultum* that Bonaparte demanded, and over which he had presided the year before at Lyons. M. de Melzi, of whom I

brilliant post which would have satisfied all my desires ; but he wanted at the same time to fetter me, to make me play the part that is now being played by M. de Melzi ; and I, who know my brother well, who know how heavy is his yoke, I who have always preferred a life of obscurity to that of a political puppet, naturally refused it. I made known to him, however, the conditions on which I would have accepted it, and you shall judge for yourself of my views in proposing them. I required that Piedmont should be united to the Italian Republic ; that I should be at liberty to restore the principal fortresses ; that the French troops, and especially General Murat, should withdraw from the Republican territory. Had I obtained these concessions I should have been really master. I should have been dependent on France so far as the Cabinet and political relations were concerned, but not materially. My brother, whose ambition is boundless, would by no means consent to my conditions, and caused himself to be appointed President.

“You do not know him,” added Joseph Bonaparte ; “he is a wonderful man, and each day I am more and more amazed at the depth, the extent

have already spoken, then received the title of Vice-President of the Italian Republic.

and the boldness of his projects. Believe me, he has not yet reached the goal of his ambition."

"I do not doubt it," I replied; "after hearing what you have just told me, and without attempting to penetrate into all his designs, it is not difficult to see what he aspires to, and that the founding a dynasty, the empire of Europe, shared at most with Russia and established on the ruins of Austria and England, are the aims of all his enterprises. But for the realisation of his plans he must have a son, and Madame Bonaparte cannot give him a child."

"If Fate wills these things to be," returned Joseph Bonaparte, "they will be. Madame Bonaparte may die; by a second marriage my brother may have children, and that very marriage may be one means for carrying out the rest of the plan."

"But do you believe," I interrupted, "that he will wait to receive from the hands of Fate and from the chance of an improbable death that which it would be so easy for him to obtain at once? I do not say that your brother ought to annul his marriage, as has been suggested, on the ground that it was not blessed by the Church, though it seems to me that the First Consul intended to hold that argument in reserve when he refused to yield this point to the prayer of his wife, who so ardently desired a

religious sanction of their union.* But can he not bring the nation itself to demand a second marriage in order to ensure an heir? If he were to hint at this, you would see how soon his hint would be acted on. His experience of our pliability and docility must make him feel assured of success.

“Now is it to your interest that such an event should take place? I think so; and, contrary to the opinion of the majority of your friends, I believe it would be advantageous to you. Remember that from the moment the First Consul becomes the father of a son you are that son's natural guardian, and that to you alone can he confide the care of the child; that thus relieved from any fear of personal ambition on your part, he would bequeath to you all the necessary powers for the maintenance of the rights of the heir of his name and greatness. You would thus obtain undisputed influence during the lifetime of the First Consul, and after his death you would become Regent, if his successor were still under age. It is, on the contrary, for the interest of the other Consuls that your brother should not contract a second marriage. Without perhaps forming any very clear idea of

* This discussion had taken place shortly before my return from Corsica. Madame Bonaparte's tears and entreaties were in vain. She could not obtain her husband's consent to a religious celebration of their marriage.

their position after his death, they must perceive that in such an event, if he left no child, there would be a better chance for them, than if an heir to the name of Bonaparte, with you to defend and protect him, were to appeal to the gratitude of the nation, and to be backed up by those natural ideas of hereditary right which it has retained, and to which it would willingly again assent."

The progress of the monarchical spirit may be estimated by the foregoing conversation; there was no longer any shrinking from the complete consequences of an hereditary system. The words "Divorce," and "Regency," with all their meaning and all that they may imply, were listened to without alarm, the only difficulty was the mode of execution. From that time forth a Princess was sought for among the most illustrious reigning houses in Europe, to whom his policy or his vanity might direct the fancy of the new master of France, and to Russia, especially, all eyes were turned. It was said that Lucien Bonaparte had negotiated an alliance with the Spanish branch of the Bourbons during his stay at Madrid; but there were strong objections to bringing the race of the Bourbons back to France; the attachment of a great number of Frenchmen to that house, and the pretensions which such a return would create, might eventually be a cause of disquiet to the Bonaparte family.

Moreover, Spain could confer neither power, support, nor influence in Europe.

The policy of France at that time forbade her to hold any intercourse with Austria, and besides, there was the fear of refusal from the haughty Cæsar at Vienna. With the help of Russia only, on the other hand, Bonaparte might accomplish the vast projects he had conceived? Pride of birth had less root there than elsewhere; the Czars had sometimes disregarded that consideration in selecting a bride. The reigning house owed all its splendour to one extraordinary man, who had made it illustrious less than a hundred years before. There was a certain likeness in fortune and fate between the founder of St. Petersburg and the warrior politician who now reigned over France. Everything therefore seemed to point to an alliance with Russia. The First Consul, moreover, appeared to have far-reaching views in the political rank which he had bestowed on his wife; for when I pointed this out to Joseph Bonaparte, he answered that far from militating against the Consul's designs, it really promoted them, for that he intended thereby to regulate beforehand the position of the princess who should succeed to Madame Bonaparte. And, in truth, the honours paid to the latter at this period were sufficient to satisfy the requirements of the very proudest house, for it could not be doubted

that similar honours would be freely paid to the wife whom it should bestow upon the First Consul.

I was thus initiated by Joseph Bonaparte into the secret of a future, which was working itself out, though with less rapidity than I at first anticipated; but I was far from being dazzled by its seeming brilliancy. All these projects seemed to me more bright than solid. I could not refrain from expressing my fears on the subject to Joseph Bonaparte, and from adding certain gloomy reflections which were suggested by his confidential communications.

“Bonaparte means to reign,” I said to his brother, “and his ambition will not be satisfied by reigning over France only. But will he be a mere meteor, flashing for an instant, to die out and vanish? or will he be the founder of a new Empire to which his honoured name, handed down from age to age, will serve for a title, even as that of Cæsar is still the title of Mediæval Europe? This is what you should consider.

“In all great changes affecting governments two evidently distinct things have to be considered, institutions and individuals.

“The true founders of empires and dynasties change institutions, and the change is lasting, not always because the system of government introduced by them is better than that they have overthrown, but because public opinion, which they have won

over to their side, and which supports the new order of things, may still exist when the Reformer is no more. Mere usurpers, on the contrary, simply turn out the individuals at the head of the government and take their place. But they seldom have successors; their power dies with them and the former masters reappear.

“The new head of a State cannot therefore secure a lasting empire either to himself or his descendants, unless, while placing himself in the first rank, he also change the principles and the form of the preceding government; he must even carefully remove everything that may recall them.

“For a like reason it is vain to change the form of government unless you change its head at the same time, and also those who are supposed to succeed him.

“Apply these principles to the actual state of things, and you can judge of your brother's line of conduct and perhaps foresee its results.

“In aspiring, as everything tends to prove that he does aspire, not to power only but to the foundation of a dynasty, is Bonaparte changing, as he ought to change, the ancient forms of the French Government according to the principles just laid down? No. He is, on the contrary, endeavouring to revive the old monarchical ideas; every day

he is renewing institutions and customs which Time alone had sanctioned, but which even under our more recent kings had lost much of the prestige they had in former times, and were dying out. We are about to witness, or rather we do already see, the revival of orders, of family distinctions, soon we shall have distinction of birth. The destruction of the National Representation and the submissiveness of the Senate make the present head of the Government as completely master of the public liberty and the public fate as ever were our kings of France. The ancient system, therefore, on which *the French Monarchy was built up* is no longer essentially abolished ; its advantages and its defects still subsist. In short, all that remains to be seen is whether the new chief is better or more agreeable to the nation than the one whom we should have had in the natural course of events.

“ The question, if regarded merely from that point of view and submitted, were it possible, to the free vote of the nation, might not be unanimously answered in favour of Bonaparte. Admitting, however, that a great majority would vote for him ; that, on comparing him with the recent kings of France and with the men whose birth would entitle them at present to the throne, his fame and his talents, gratitude for the services he has rendered, and the mighty power of his genius

would prevail over affection for the family of our ancient rulers; in short, that the nation would honestly desire to leave the sceptre in his hands rather than to entrust it to others less worthy to bear it; still Bonaparte would have accomplished nothing.

“In the first place, the sentiment of admiration which has placed him where he is will of necessity decline, for it is the fate of rulers to meet with discontent and ingratitude; the comparisons drawn between him and those whose place he occupies will be less and less favourable to him every day. In order therefore to counterbalance the disenchantment of that nearer view which diminishes enthusiasm, and to turn aside the shafts of ridicule to which his private life must expose him, he must keep the nation constantly occupied with great enterprises, with wars that will add to his glory and maintain his superiority over every rival. But in this case he must repeatedly imperil his own existence. Would not reverses, nay one single reverse, strip him of all he had acquired? and would the army, when fighting for one man’s ambition only, the army, when no longer kindled by the enthusiasm of the wars of the Republic, always be able, even with all the aid of the military genius of its leader, to guarantee him from reverses or to repair them?

“Secondly, admitting that he overcomes all these obstacles, the end of his life must, none the less, be the end of his greatness; he, after his death, will, none the less, be ranked with the usurpers. How can we suppose that there would then be any hesitation between his family and that of the Bourbons? How can we fail to see that the Bourbons would be speedily recalled, if the place left vacant by your brother were merely that of a king, if he had not made such important changes in the ancient forms of the Government that the nation would insist on retaining advantages whose value it would have experienced, by defending the family from whom it had received them?


“Bonaparte should therefore establish a marked difference between the past and the future, if he would have his achievements to live. He should adopt a form of government no less powerful indeed than the Monarchy, but so totally different in its exterior, so true to the promises of the Revolution, that each individual should be directly interested in supporting the author of that order of things, and be convinced that the system would not last unless the highest post were perpetuated in the family of him who created it. This indeed would be to found a new Empire.

“But to want to be king of France, as Louis XIV.

and his descendants were kings of France, to govern despotically like them, to surround himself with the same guards, the same ceremonial, to give his wife the same rank as that of the daughters of Austria and of France, would only be to put himself in the place of the man who formerly sat on the hereditary throne; that is to say, to usurp. Bonaparte will do much, if he succeeds in keeping that throne during his life. To raise his descendants to it is impossible; whatever may be accomplished or hoped for, so soon as the question arises of a choice between the Bourbon and the Bonaparte family, there will never be either hesitation or doubt in the popular mind.”*

While these confidential conversations were taking place between Joseph Bonaparte and myself, the First Consul was advancing with firm steps along the path he had marked out, and everything, it must be admitted, seemed to favour his progress. The peace with England had been followed by Lord Whitworth's arrival as ambassador, and no circumstance that had as yet occurred was so flattering to the vanity of Bonaparte. I was present at the reception of the ambassador on the 14th Frimaire (December 5). The Tuileries were crowded; the First Consul was magnificently attired; a gold

* The above remarks were uttered and consigned to writing on the 25th Frimaire, year XI. (December 16, 1802).



sword hung at his side, adorned with the finest of the Crown diamonds; conspicuous among these was the stone called the *Regent*.* In the evening there was a State reception; Ambassadors, Generals, Senators, and Councillors of State were there with their wives. The First Consul's countenance revealed his satisfaction; English pride had given way before him. This was a triumph, but a short-lived one. The Ministers, following the example of their head, also gave receptions, at which they displayed great magnificence. I was present at the reception of the Minister of War; it was somewhat remarkable. Among the guests was General Moreau. He appeared in a simple costume of plain cloth, contrasting strangely with the uniforms, and the gold and silk-embroidered suits of the other guests. This gave rise to remark and conjecture. Was it intended as a reflection on the Consular Government? Was the General's motive modesty or affectation? Each one answered these questions in his own way. But whatever Moreau's motives may have been, the result was successful. Great attention was paid to the General, his importance was augmented, and thenceforth Bonaparte must

* This diamond, one of the most beautiful and perfect stones in existence, had been purchased during the Regency of the Duke of Orleans, hence its name. It weighs 546 grains, and cost 2,500,000 francs (£100,000).

have looked on him less as a rival than as a declared enemy.

For the time being, however, that enmity cast no shadow on the fortunes of the First Consul. The whole of France submitted to his rule. Piedmont was united to France; the Milanese territory, Parma, Placenza, and Bologna, under the name of the Italian Republic, had acknowledged him as their president and ruler; Tuscany, transformed into the kingdom of Etruria, had received from him an Infant of Spain as her king, who was the mere vassal of France; the negotiations entered upon in consequence of the Treaty of Lunéville, and carried on by Joseph Bonaparte and by Count Cobentzel, had been prosperously concluded on the 9th Nivôse, year XI. (December 30, 1802), by two conventions, by which the indemnification of the dethroned German Princes was agreed to, and the annexation of Piedmont to France was recognised; so that a lasting peace seemed likely to ensue.

On the one hand, foreign affairs assumed a more favourable aspect daily, and on the other, Bonaparte's success in the interior of France was equally important to his ulterior designs.

News of the death of General Leclerc, who commanded the fatal expedition to St. Domingo, reached Paris on the 17th Nivôse, year XI. (Jan. 7, 1803). The General had married Pauline Bonaparte, and

was consequently brother-in-law to the First Consul. His death gave a fine opportunity for reviving the ancient etiquette of Court-mourning, and was used accordingly. The Council of State, specially convoked on the 20th Nivôse, paid a visit of ceremony to the First Consul. The Senate and the Magistracy did the same. All the great bodies of the State went into mourning, and the death was officially notified to the Foreign ambassadors resident in Paris, and to the Ministers of the Republic at various foreign Courts. Madame Bonaparte also received visits from the wives of the principal public officials; and those ladies appeared in mourning. Curiously enough, this return to former Court customs made a profound sensation, and was looked upon as a bolder venture than others of greater importance made by the First Consul, than for instance, the change in the coinage which took place one month later. By a decree passed in the Council of State on the 19th Pluviôse (February 8), the head of Bonaparte, with an inscription *Napoléon Bonaparte, premier Consul*, was substituted for the allegorical face which had marked the coinage since 1792. The reverse was to have been decorated with a wreath of oak-leaves, with the value of the coin marked in the centre, and the inscription, *le peuple français*. But these words were replaced by *République française*. This great alteration, one so contrary

to Republican feeling, was effected, so to speak, without attracting attention. Yet the sitting of the Council of State in which so strongly monarchical a resolution was passed was a remarkable one, not from the raising of any voice in opposition to this new usurpation, but from a curious discussion on the motto that was to be graven on the rim of the coin. Bonaparte inquired whether the former coins did not bear on their rim these words, *Domine, saluum fac regem*, and on receiving an affirmative reply, he raised the question whether it would not be well to retain that ancient formula, and to engrave *Domine, saluum fac rempublicam*. This proposition was about to be carried, when Lebrun, the Third Consul, remarked that the word *Domine* might give rise to a false interpretation, and that it might be applied to the First Consul by translating it into *Seigneur, sauve la république*; "Lord, save the Republic!" "No," replied Bonaparte curtly; "there is no fear of its being so understood, for that is a thing already done." However, the old motto was rejected, and *Dieu saúve la France* was substituted for it.

At the same time that these innovations, the aim of which was obvious to every one, were succeeding each other without opposition, or at the very most only afforded subjects for a few epigrams, it became necessary to reward the magistracy, by whose help

they had been effected. The submission of the Senate, which had already proved itself so obsequious, must be secured, and its attachment irrevocably purchased by pecuniary gifts. This was accomplished by Bonaparte with extreme skill in the *Senatus-Consultum* of the 14th Nivôse. The principal points of that Act were discussed in an extraordinary sitting of the Senate which took place on the 9th of the same month. On pretext of definitively constituting it, and making its position more stable and more imposing, an income of four millions from the produce of the sale of the woods of the State, and one million from the property of the *émigrés*, was allotted to the endowment of that body. By this endowment, the minimum salary of a Senator became 40,000 francs (£1600), and it also provided for the extraordinary expense of a Council of Administration, consisting of six members of the Senate; two under the name of 'Lenders;' * two great officers; a Chancellor and a Treasurer. These six personages were to have residences assigned them in the Luxembourg and to be charged with the representation of the Senate. Independently of this annual endowment, thirty senatorships were instituted in various departments, each with an annual income of 25,000 francs (£1000), and a manor, in which the Senators, provided with these Prebends or

* *Prêteurs.*

Commanderies, should be bound to reside during at least three months of the year. During their stay in the provinces, the Senators holding these senatorial prerogatives were to act as intermediaries between the government and the governed, and to report to the Senate the state of public opinion in their departments. Now, as these Senatorial seats were at the disposal of the First Consul, and as their number was limited to one-third of the whole Senate, it is evident that the first filling up of these appointments—which was only to be effected by degrees—and the distribution of the inheritance when left vacant by the death of the holders, must afford the Government an immense influence over the Senate.

All these measures were passed unanimously, as I learned from Joseph Bonaparte, who, in his capacity of Senator, was present at the sitting. "I am quite undeceived," he said to me, on his return, "as to Republicanism in France; it no longer exists. Not a single member of the Senate raised his voice against the proposed measures, nor even took the trouble of affecting a disinterestedness he did not feel. The most Republican of them all were using their pencils to calculate the share of each in the common dividend."

After having thus secured and fashioned with his own hands an instrument as supple as it was strong ;

after having surrounded himself with all the external attributes of sovereignty, unopposed, and, still more, after having grasped the reality of absolute power with a firm hand, there remained but one more step for Bonaparte to take, in order to call his great position by its true name, when the clouds, arising from the execution of the Treaty of Amiens, which were beginning to darken the political horizon between England and France, arrested his progress for a time. On several occasions already the First Consul had shown unequivocal signs of aversion to England. At the sitting of the Council of State when the alteration of the effigy on the coinage was adopted, an incidental discussion had afforded him an opportunity of declaring his opinion of the English, and he had expressed himself with remarkable bitterness. To the great surprise of the Council he had found fault with everything that existed in England. Her national spirit, her policy, her form of Government, nothing escaped his censure, which he even extended to Shakespeare and Milton, whom I had little expected to hear criticised in the Council of State of France.

Bonaparte's personal dislike to England gathered strength every day from the perusal of the English newspapers, and especially of those which were edited by the *émigrés*, and printed in French, in London, and which contained the coarsest abuse of

the First Consul and his family ; from the opposition offered to M. de Talleyrand in the negotiations opened with Lord Whitworth respecting the cession of Malta—one of the conditions of the Treaty of Amiens—and most of all from the failure of an attempt made by himself to inveigle England into sharing his ambitious views, by proposing to her, in no dubious terms, to join with France and divide the world between them. This attempt, which proves how little Bonaparte understood the principles of the English Government, and how great was his delusion on the subject (a delusion which clung to him until the fatal moment when he trusted himself into the hands of that Government), is recorded in a despatch from Lord Whitworth to Lord Hawkesbury, printed by order of Parliament as a justification of the declaration of war, and in which the ambassador gives a detailed account of a conversation between the First Consul and himself on the 29th Pluviôse (February 18).*

* See the 'Morning Chronicle' of May 19, 1803. The King of England's declaration of war was published, with annotations, in the 'Moniteur' of 23rd Prairial; but the text of the accompanying documents, which were printed in England, is not to be found in the French paper. That confines itself to the following remark: "We have now to examine the official documents published by the English Ministers in defence of their Sovereign's manifesto." But as the 'Moniteur' never carried out that pledge, and as the conversation between Bonaparte and

These suggestions were rejected, as it was natural that they should be. But the vexation of having made them in vain must, no doubt, have been very keen to the First Consul.

So many subjects of misunderstanding, to which must be added the displeasure caused in England by Colonel Sebastiani's report, published in the 'Moniteur,' relating to his mission in Egypt, and which openly revealed the First Consul's designs of transforming that country into a French Colony, indicated an impending rupture; and this, in fact, took place before long.

On the 21st Ventôse (March 12) the speech of the King of England to Parliament, delivered on the 8th, reached Paris. It produced a great sensation, and some surprise, because several of the causes which had led to His Majesty's utterances were still unknown to the public. And as the expressions used in the King's speech were so hostile that it might be taken as a declaration of war, all the consequences of an unexpected rupture, in which so many interests were involved, became suddenly apparent, and caused universal uneasiness and trouble. There was a

Lord Whitworth is of the highest importance to an intelligent appreciation of events, and throws a strong light on the character and views of the First Consul, I think it well to give the whole despatch *verbatim*. The reader will find it at the end of the present chapter.

serious fall in the public funds, and all commercial speculation was suspended.

The above is a general sketch of this great event, of its causes and its immediate effects. I shall now trace, in detail, the progress of the crisis during the five weeks that elapsed between the King's speech to Parliament, and Lord Whitworth's departure from Paris, which completed the rupture. I shall relate the secret negotiations which preceded it; and state the special opportunities that were afforded me of observing the sentiments and the conduct of the First Consul at this conjuncture.

On the day following that on which the King of England's speech became known, the First Consul met Lord Whitworth, who was paying a visit to Madame Bonaparte, and a very animated conversation ensued. After expressing his utter astonishment at the proceedings of the English Government, Bonaparte continued in the following terms: "How is it that the King chose the very moment when the French Government was evincing the most friendly dispositions? Was it because he wants to seize the opportunity of my vessels (*sic*) being scattered in the four quarters of the globe, and does he hope, this being the case, to achieve the destruction of the French Navy? But I too can make war in the sole interests of France, and such a war would last at least fifteen years."

"That is a long time," was Lord Whitworth's only reply.

"However," continued Bonaparte, "I have nothing but praise to bestow on your own personal attitude, and your presence here has given me great pleasure. I hear the Duchess of Dorset* is unwell, but I hope she will have time to recover her health before she leaves Paris."

Two days after this conversation, the Council of State was summoned to discuss a project of law by which the exclusive privilege of issuing notes was to be granted to the Bank of France. But the First Consul, instead of confining himself to this, addressed us, at the very beginning of the sitting, on the present state of our relations with England.

"I protest," said he, "that there does not exist a single cause of dissension between the two nations which might even serve as a pretext for the King of England's last proceeding. I have faithfully carried out all the conditions of the Treaty of Amiens ; but I require the English on their side to observe them also, and unless we want to pass for the most contemptible nation in Europe, we must allow no modification in the execution. But I can scarcely believe that the English really desire war. They

* Lord Whitworth had married the widow of the third Duke of Dorset.

do not usually commence it in that way ; they begin at once, and talk afterwards."

It will be seen by this that the First Consul did not as yet approach the true cause of the misunderstanding between the two Governments. The English wanted to retain Malta as a compensation for all the acquisitions made by France since the Peace of Amiens, especially in Italy. The British Government, in order to facilitate matters, had even secretly proposed to the First Consul that it should recognise sundry personal advantages to himself and his family, such as the title of Consular Majesty, and hereditary succession to that title, if he would not insist on the evacuation of Malta. These overtures had been made in Paris by a M. Hubert, to whom they had been entrusted by the English ambassador, and were addressed in particular to Joseph Bonaparte through the medium of Regnault de St. Jean-d'Angely, who was in communication with the secret agent. But even supposing these overtures to have been sincere, Bonaparte was by no means inclined to accept them. He well knew that he needed no help from England in order to traverse the short space that lay between himself and the throne. He also knew that a successful war was a surer means of reaching that throne than the protection of a foreign Power, to be obtained by a sacrifice of national dignity, and, moreover, that a

negotiation which would have had personal advantages only for its result would have a ridiculous side. He insisted all the more strongly on the literal execution of the treaty, because of his conviction that the English Ministry, knowing the full importance of the possession of the island of Malta, would never consent to give it up, and that from this contest a rupture must necessarily ensue. Indeed, after his unsuccessful attempt to associate England with him in his ambition, war was his only honourable resource, and it might in the long run be more advantageous than hurtful to his projects.

But public opinion promptly declared itself against war. The renewal of hostilities was, in general, looked upon with alarm, and the few remaining lovers of liberty saw nothing but ruin and disaster in the event of reverses, and in the case of success only an additional means by which the First Consul would reach the goal of his ambition. They did not believe that the national honour was so deeply involved in this question as was alleged. A war which was to begin by leaving the object of the contest in the hands of the enemy, from which nothing but a fresh treaty could remove it, seemed an absurdity. "France," said I to Joseph Bonaparte, with whom I was speaking on the subject, while passing a few days with him at Morfontaine, towards the end of Germinal, "France, depend upon

it, feels none of this political sensitiveness; the only reason that has been put forward, at any rate ostensibly, and which tends to rekindle a conflagration which may spread all over Europe. The real desire of the nation is for peace. It would hardly have noticed a slight modification in the Treaty of Amiens. This headstrong war will not be popular among us, because it endangers all the benefits we have acquired through peace. It will, on the contrary, be popular with our enemies, because it will tend to wipe out the shame of an inglorious treaty, and, moreover, to ruin our commerce and our navy, which are the objects of their unsleeping jealousy. This state of feeling at the commencement of a war is of more importance than people seem to think. Moreover, its beginning must necessarily be annoying and alarming, since, having no enemy on the Continent, we shall have no victory on land to contrast with our defeats on the sea, and with the successive losses of our ships and our colonies, of which every day will bring us news. Then discouragement will begin, murmurs will follow, all regard for the head of the Government will vanish, and the consequences of these various sentiments may be made manifest, before a successful descent on the enemy's coast,—our only means of meeting him and avenging ourselves,—comes to revive the depressed spirits of the people."

These remarks made little impression at the time on Joseph Bonaparte. Under the sway of his brother, trusting in the inexhaustible resources of that brother's military genius, and taking a kind of personal pride in the strict execution of a treaty which he had himself negotiated and signed, he looked upon war from a different point of view; and though I will do him the justice to say that had the continuance of peace depended on him, it would not have been broken, and that he would even have done all in his power to avoid war, still he did not rate the maintenance of peace so highly as I did.

On my return to Paris I found the probabilities of a rupture greatly increased. On Sunday the 11th Floréal (May 1) Lord Whitworth did not appear at the usual ambassadors' audience. The First Consul conversed for a long time with M. Markoff, the Russian ambassador, and when the audience was over, he detained the members of the Senate and the Council of State, who, according to custom, were present, and began an animated conversation with them. His anger with England was excessive.

"They want to make us," he said, speaking of the English Ministers, "they want to make us jump the ditch, and we'll jump it. How could a nation of forty millions consent to let another nation lay down the law for it! The independence of

States must come first; before liberty, and before the prosperity of trade and manufactures. Can we allow the English to lay down as a point of doctrine that they will only execute the treaties they have signed, in so far as they shall not be disadvantageous to them? To accept a modification of the Treaty of Amiens is to accept the first link of a chain which will afterwards lengthen itself out, and will end by our complete subjection, by a treaty of commerce such as that of 1775, and, in short, by the return of a Commissioner to Dunkerque. Let us cede Malta, and to-morrow our vessels will be insulted, our ships will be forced to salute those of the English, and to endure a disgraceful inspection. We shall no doubt have an arduous beginning; we shall have to lament losses at sea, perhaps even the loss of our colonies; but we shall be strengthened on the Continent. We have already acquired an extent of coast that makes us formidable; we will add to this, we will form a more complete coast-system, and England shall end by shedding tears of blood over the war she will have undertaken.

“Wheresoever in Europe there remains a sense of justice, the blame of this war will be thrown on her.

“Whence this quarrel? Have we given the English any cause of complaint? I protest that since the Treaty of Amiens we have asked nothing of England. We have left her in quiet, we have

faithfully observed the conditions of the treaty. Therefore of all men in Europe perhaps I was the most surprised at the King of England's speech. Armaments!* I have ordered none. Negotiations attempted with England! I have neither opened nor entertained any since the Peace of Amiens.† The whole thing is the fable of the wolf and the lamb. For the last seven weeks the English have acted with as much insolence as we have shown reserve and moderation. Did they, finding me so moderate—me, whom they know to be of little endurance—imagine that I would not dare to make war? That, being forced to conciliate the people, I should not be able to resist? They deceive themselves. Their emissaries, and the sums they expend to sow dissensions among us, have hitherto entirely failed of success; they are employing their money very ill.

“But what disappoints them most is this. They believe we could not exist through a peace, that our internal divisions would do us more harm than war, and that we have only to be left to ourselves to perish. At the present time the order prevailing in France, the satisfactory aspect of our administra-

* Allusion was made in the King's speech to the extraordinary armaments taking place in the French ports.

† The overtures made to Lord Whitworth in his interview with Bonaparte a month before, had been regarded in England as the beginning of negotiations.

tion, and our finance, alarm them much more than our alleged armaments. By their arrogance and their insolent pretensions they are endeavouring to effect what their infernal policy failed in doing.

“ But can we fail to be astonished at the conduct of their Ministry at the present moment ? Can we avoid seeing its positive insanity ? What ! they want to fight us in a second war, and they begin by restoring to us the Cape, Martinique, and Elba, and by evacuating Egypt, and then they make difficulties on one single point of the treaty, Malta ; an article guaranteed by the Continental Powers ! of a truth, there is both folly and extravagance in such conduct.

“ At the present moment, when the crisis is impending, they send us, through their ambassador, a summons to answer their demand within six days, at the expiration of which he announces that he has orders to leave Paris ; and the ambassador will not even communicate this to us in writing ! We ask him for a Note on which we may deliberate, and he refuses ! Let him go, then ! we shall have nothing to reproach ourselves with.

“ Now, is it in our power to give them what does not belong to us ? For they do not restrict their claims to Malta ; they ask besides for the island of Lampedusa, which does not belong to France. Lastly, they demand reparation for disrespectful

articles in our newspapers, while every day their own overwhelm us with insult and outrage carried to excess ! But they want to be able to vituperate us, without being abused in return ; this is another of their political doctrines."

This conversation, or rather this allocution, for no one expressed either approval or the reverse, lasted about three-quarters of an hour, and was interrupted and resumed several times. I have given its most striking expressions and phraseology, just as I transcribed them at the time.

Notwithstanding this almost public manifestation of the mind of the First Consul, and the small hope it left of the continuance of peace, negotiations were not, as yet, broken off. For, independently of those officially carried on between the English ambassador and M. de Talleyrand, the secret negotiation in which Regnault de St. Jean-d'Angely had taken part was still in progress. Malouet, a former member of the Constituent Assembly was also engaged in the latter. He had seen Joseph Bonaparte twice, and had contrived secret interviews between him and Lord Whitworth, who had several times declared that he would treat solely with Joseph Bonaparte, and not with Talleyrand or his creatures, whom, he said, he could only approach with bribes in his hand. No better understanding had, however, been arrived at in these fresh conferences than in the preceding

ones, which were carried on through Hubert. The First Consul would concede nothing. But notwithstanding his stubbornness, he was persuaded until the very day of audience that Lord Whitworth would be present, and would accept the invitation to dinner that he had sent him. The absence of the ambassador and his refusal of this invitation had deeply hurt the First Consul, and brought about the explosion of anger which took place, as I have said, in presence of the Senate and the Council of State.

After such a speech, it was impossible any longer to doubt that Bonaparte was resolved to go to war. I even thought it undignified on his part, after expressing himself so openly on the subject, to try any further means of conciliation. This, however, he did. Either the First Consul, when the decisive moment approached, became alarmed at the consequences of the step he was about to take, or he only wished to gain time, or to justify the resolution he had come to by further and more pacific propositions; for negotiations were resumed on Monday the 12th Floréal (May 1) with fresh activity. On the ambassador's sending for his passports, the Minister of Exterior Relations made an evasive reply and the passports were not forwarded. Then Regnault de St. Jean-d'Angely was commissioned to propose, as a *mezzo termine*, that Malta should be left in the hands

of Russia. This proposal, which was carried by Malouet to the ambassador at 10 P.M. on the Tuesday was rejected. Lord Whitworth declared that he could not accede to it, and insisted on the absolute surrender of the island. His reply having been communicated to Joseph Bonaparte, the latter hinted that the exact date of the handing over of Malta to Russia would be considered immaterial, and that as the island would remain in the hands of England until it passed under Russian rule, such an arrangement might be regarded as a veritable cession. Wednesday was spent in these conferences. Extraordinary sittings of the Senate, of the Council of State, of the Legislative Body and of the Tribune had been announced for the following day, the 15th Floréal (May 5). Messages or communications from the Government were to have announced the rupture with England to all these bodies. The parts had been distributed, and the Presidents forewarned; orators who might be depended on had prepared their speeches. But nothing of all this took place, and for the following reasons.

The secret negotiation, opened on the preceding day, had assumed an official character. Lord Whitworth had seen M. de Talleyrand at 5 P.M. The proposal to cede Malta to Russia was seriously considered, with the reservation that the date of the handing over was not to be insisted on, so that the

proposal, thus understood, tended practically to leave Malta for a long time, if not for ever, in the power of England. Lord Whitworth could not have agreed to this without exceeding his instructions, but he consented to despatch a courier to London, and to defer his own departure for ten days, so as to allow time for his receiving an answer.

That answer arrived on Monday the 19th Floréal (May 9), and on the following day, Lord Whitworth presented a note containing the result of the deliberations of the Cabinet of St. James's.

The offer to place Malta in the hands of Russia was rejected, the special reason being that the latter Power had not given a formal consent to that arrangement. But, while declining it, the English Government made further propositions, of which the principal ones were as follows :

1. The complete cession of the Isle of Lampedusa, with power to erect buildings and a fort ;
2. The right of remaining in Malta until such time as the erections on the Isle of Lampedusa should be completed (this was a secret article) ;
3. A fair indemnity to the King of Sardinia ;
4. The evacuation of Holland, and of Switzerland.

The increase to French territory since the Peace of Amiens was recognised. But an answer to these propositions was required within thirty-six hours,

at the expiration of which time the ambassador was ordered to leave Paris.

The note was ill-received by the First Consul. The last clause especially, requiring a reply within six-and-thirty hours, made him excessively angry. He roughly blamed Talleyrand for not having immediately sent it back, and went so far as to say that in venturing to present it to him Talleyrand had been guilty of disrespect.

In this frame of mind, he summoned for the following day, Wednesday 21st Floréal (May 11th), a Privy Council composed of the Two Consuls, Joseph Bonaparte, the Ministers of War, Marine and Exterior Relations.

The proceedings opened with a discussion of the English ambassador's note. The First Consul spoke with great vehemence. He again attacked Talleyrand, who endured the storm with patience, and, together with Joseph Bonaparte, persistently declared himself on the side of peace. The other members of the Council took part with the First Consul, and still further excited his anger, which already was at white-heat. It was resolved by a large majority that a negative answer should be returned to the ambassador. A reply in that sense was accordingly drawn up, and the order was given that his passports should be forwarded.

All was over by the Wednesday evening, and

there was no longer room for hope. But Joseph Bonaparte made, as from himself, one final effort. He offered to obtain his brother's consent to the arrangement proposed by the English Government, on condition that France should maintain a garrison at Otranto, during the occupation of Malta by the English. On Thursday morning, two further interviews took place between Lord Whitworth and Joseph Bonaparte, who then repaired to St. Cloud to report the result. The ambassador consented to defer his departure, if the First Consul would convey to him officially the proposition that had been made only in confidence. He even promised, should the First Consul decline to take that step ostensibly, to travel slowly, in order to be still on French territory when an answer should be received to the despatch which he undertook to send to London.

Without formally rejecting the proposal that Joseph Bonaparte appeared to have made of his own accord, but which, nevertheless, I believe he had not taken entirely upon himself to make, the First Consul declined to give any official character to this proceeding. Lord Whitworth therefore asked for his passports, obtained them, and prepared to set out on the evening of Thursday the 22nd Floréal (May 12).*

* As the note in answer to the English ultimatum is dated

On that same day a post arrived from St. Petersburg. It did not bring, as had been hoped and was reported, the positive consent of Russia to receive Malta in deposit, but an assurance from the Emperor Alexander that he would accept the office of mediator between England and France, and that he was willing to accede to all the arrangements which those two Powers might adopt in the interests of peace.

M. de Markoff hastened to Lord Whitworth, and, according to instructions received from his Court, earnestly begged him not to leave Paris. He did not succeed, but the English ambassador promised to forward another despatch, and renewed his pledge of travelling with so little speed as to be still in France when replies from London should reach him.

Lord Whitworth left Paris late on the 22nd Floréal (May 12), and remained for the night at Chantilly. A crowd gathered at his doors at the time he was to set out, for his departure occasioned real consternation. For some days past a kind of popular ferment had been noticeable. A considerable number of new crown-pieces, on which the effigy of the First Consul had been defaced, were circulating in the markets, and some murmuring

23rd Floréal, it would seem that it was addressed to the ambassador after midnight, either when he was just setting out, or when he was already on the road.

was heard. This was however only a temporary effervescence, and had no further consequences.

After the ambassador's departure, the First Consul himself dictated a note to his brother, in which he proposed leaving Malta for ten years in the hands of England, provided that for the same space of time the French should maintain garrisons at Otranto and in the Kingdom of Naples. This proposition was conveyed to the Secretary to the English Embassy, who still remained in Paris, and who took it to Lord Whitworth. Regnault de St. Jean-d'Angely and the M. Hubert of whom I have already spoken were the intermediaries in this last negotiation, which at first seemed to promise success. But it failed like the others. Lord Whitworth continued his journey. Général Andréossy, the French ambassador in London, had in like manner left that capital, and the two ambassadors crossed the Straits on the same day. Thus all was over, and war was declared.

The departure of the English ambassador had been merely announced, without comment, in the 'Moniteur' of the 24th Floréal. But the Council of State was assembled on the same day, and the First Consul presided at the sitting. He began by saying that he had thought it his duty not to leave such a body as the Council of State any longer in ignorance of events relating to matters of such importance;

that he therefore would order that the note which the Minister of Exterior Relations had handed to Lord Whitworth from him (the First Consul) on the preceding day, in answer to the English ultimatum of the 20th Floréal, should be read to us; that, nevertheless, as all hope of an understanding had not as yet died out, although for his own part he retained but little, he thought the communication should not as yet be published, but for the present should be made by some of the Councillors of State to the three Constituent Bodies of the State, and by them received at a private sitting. The note, as published in the 'Moniteur' of the 30th Floréal, was then read aloud to us by the Secretary of State, and its moderate and dignified tone was generally commended. I remarked, however, that it touched very lightly on our acquisitions since the Peace of Amiens, and not at all on Colonel Sebastiani's report, which was one of England's grievances against the French Government, and probably the real cause of England's laying claim to Malta. But these were our two weak points, as they were the strong ones of the English Ministry.

After the reading of the note, the First Consul named three of the Councillors of State to take it to the Senate, the Legislative Body and the Tribunate; and a few days later, on the 30th Floréal, when news had come that the two ambassadors had

crossed the Channel, the note was published in the 'Moniteur.' On the same day the Council of State was again convoked extraordinarily, and in the morning I received a line from the Secretary of State informing me that I had been appointed by the First Consul, with two of my colleagues (Béranger and Pétiet), to speak on behalf of the Government at the Tribune.

All the Ministers were present at the sitting, which was presided over by the Second Consul. He informed us that, under present circumstances with regard to England, the Government had thought it well to communicate to the different bodies of the State the papers relating to the negotiations with England, beginning with the first steps taken shortly after the 18th Brumaire, comprising all that had taken place when preliminaries had been signed in London between M. Otto and Lord Hawkesbury, and the protocol of the Treaty of Amiens; ending with the recent transactions from which the present rupture had resulted. After this, the message was read to us, and then the Councillors of State, who had been named beforehand to convey it to the various bodies, set out on their errand.

The message and the voluminous papers appended to it appear in the 'Moniteur' of the 1st Prairial. I examined them at the time with great care, but I sought in vain for what I had been told I should

find there,—some positive information as to the manner in which England, during the negotiations at Amiens, had regarded events in Italy.* Nor could

* The explanations, which the author sought in vain among the documents published by the 'Moniteur,' are to be found in the following despatch from Lord Hawkesbury to Lord Whitworth, dated February 9, 1803.

"Downing Street, February 9, 1803.

"In answer to your Excellency's despatch of January 27, relative to the enquiry made of you by the French Government, on the subject of Malta, I can have no difficulty in assuring you that His Majesty has entertained a most sincere desire that the Treaty of Amiens might be executed in a full and complete manner; but it has not been possible for him to consider this treaty as having been founded on principles different from those which have been invariably applied to every other antecedent treaty or convention, namely that they were negotiated with reference to the actual state of possession of the different parties, and of the treaties or public engagements by which they were bound at the time of its conclusion; and that if that state of possession and of engagements was so instantly altered by the act of either of the parties as to affect the nature of the compact itself, the other party has a right, according to the law of nations, to interfere for the purpose of obtaining satisfaction or compensation for any essential difference which such acts may have subsequently made in their relative situation; that if there ever was a case to which this principle might be applied with peculiar propriety, it was that of the late treaty of peace; for the negotiation was conducted on a basis not merely proposed by His Majesty, but specially agreed to in an official note by the French Government, viz. that His Majesty should keep a compensation out of his conquests for the important acquisitions of territory made by France upon the Continent. This is a sufficient proof that the compact was understood to have been concluded with reference to the then existing state of things; for the

I find any confirmation of Russia's consent to hold Malta as a deposit. This last circumstance has always been doubtful.

measure of His Majesty's compensation was to be calculated with reference to the acquisitions of France at that time; and if the interference of the French Government in the general affairs of Europe since that period; if their interposition with respect to Switzerland and Holland, whose independence was guaranteed by them at the conclusion of the treaty of peace; if the annexations which have been made to France in various quarters, but particularly those in Italy, have extended the territory and increased the power of the French Government, His Majesty would be warranted, consistently with the spirit of the treaty of peace, in claiming equivalents for these acquisitions, as a counterpoise to the augmentation of the power of France. His Majesty, however, anxious to prevent all ground of misunderstanding, and desirous of consolidating the general peace of Europe, as far as might be in his power, was willing to have waived the pretensions he might have a right to advance of this nature; and as the other articles of the definitive treaty have been in a course of execution on his part, so he would have been ready to have carried into effect the true interest and spirit of the 10th Article, the execution of which, according to its terms, had been rendered impracticable by circumstances which it was not in His Majesty's power to control. A communication to your Lordship would accordingly have been prepared conformably to this disposition, if the attention of His Majesty's Government had not been attracted by the very extraordinary publication of the report of Colonel Sebastiani to the First Consul. It is impossible for His Majesty to view this report in any other light than as an official publication; for without referring particularly to explanations, which have been repeatedly given upon the subject of publications in the 'Moniteur,' the article in question, as it purports to be the report to the First Consul of an accredited agent, as it appears to have been

The following is the despatch addressed by Lord Whitworth to Lord Hawkesbury, and alluded to in the preceding pages.

“Paris, February 21, 1803.

“MY LORD.—My last despatch, in which I gave your Lordship an account of my conference with M. de Talleyrand, was scarcely gone, when I

signed by Colonel Sebastiani himself, and as it is published in the official paper, with an official title affixed to it, must be considered as authorised by the French Government. This report contains the most unjustifiable insinuations and charges against the officer who commanded his forces in Egypt, and against the British army in that quarter, insinuations and charges wholly destitute of foundation, and such as would warrant His Majesty in demanding that satisfaction, which, on occasions of this nature, independent Powers in a state of amity have a right to expect from each other. It discloses, moreover, views in the highest degree injurious to the interests of His Majesty's dominions, and directly repugnant to and utterly inconsistent with the spirit and letter of the treaty of peace concluded between His Majesty and the French Government; and His Majesty would feel that he was wanting in a proper regard to the honour of his Crown, and to the interests of his dominion, if he could see with indifference such a system developed and avowed. His Majesty cannot, therefore, regard the conduct of the French Government on various occasions since the conclusion of the definitive treaty, the insinuations and charges contained in the report of Colonel Sebastiani, and the views which that report discloses, without feeling it necessary for him distinctly to declare that it will be impossible for him to enter into any further discussion relative to Malta, unless he receives satisfactory explanation on the subject of this communication.

“Your Excellency is desired to take an early opportunity of

received a note from him, informing me that the First Consul wished to converse with me, and desired I would come to him at the Tuileries at 9 o'clock. He received me in his cabinet, with tolerable cordiality, and, after talking on different subjects for a few minutes, he desired me to sit down, as he himself did on the other side of the table, and began. He told me that he felt it necessary, after what had passed between me and M. Talleyrand, that he should, in the most clear and authentick manner, make known his sentiments to me in order to their being communicated to His Majesty; and he conceived this would be more effectually done by himself than through any medium whatever. He said, that it was a matter of infinite disappointment to him that the Treaty of Amiens, instead of being followed by conciliation and friendship, the natural effects of peace, had been productive only of continual and increasing jealousy and mistrust; and that this mistrust was now avowed in such a manner as must bring the point to an issue.

fully explaining His Majesty's sentiments as above stated to the French Government.

"I am, &c.,

(Signed)

"HAWKESBURY.

"His Excellency, LORD WHITWORTH, K.B."

&c.

&c.

&c.

“He now enumerated the several provocations which he pretended to have received from England. He placed in the first line our not evacuating Malta and Alexandria, as we were bound to do by treaty.

“In this he said that no consideration on earth should make him acquiesce; and of the two, he had rather see us in possession of the Fauxbourg St. Antoine than Malta. He then adverted to the abuse thrown out against him in the English publick prints; but this he said he did not so much regard as that which appeared in the French papers published in London. This he considered as much more mischievous, since it was meant to excite this country against him and his Government. He complained of the protection given to Georges and others of his description, who, instead of being sent to Canada, as had been repeatedly promised, were permitted to remain in England, handsomely pensioned, and constantly committing all sorts of crimes on the coasts of France, as well as in the interior. In confirmation of this, he told me, that two men had within these few days been apprehended in Normandy, and were now on their way to Paris, who were hired assassins, and employed by the Bishop of Arras, by the Baron de Rolle, by Georges, and by Dutheil, as would be fully proved in a Court of Justice, and made known to the world.

“ He acknowledged that the irritation he felt against England increased daily, because every wind [I make use as much as I can of his own ideas and expressions] which blew from England brought nothing but enmity and hatred against him.

“ He now went back to Egypt, and told me, that if he had felt the smallest inclination to take possession of it by force, he might have done it a month ago, by sending twenty-five thousand men to Aboukir, who would have possessed themselves of the whole country in defiance of the four thousand British in Alexandria. That, instead of that garrison being a means of protecting Egypt, it was only furnishing him with a pretence for invading it. This he should not do, whatever might be his desire to have it as a colony, because he did not think it worth the risk of a war, in which he might, perhaps, be considered as the aggressor, and by which he should lose more than he could gain, since, sooner or later, Egypt would belong to France, by the falling to pieces of the Turkish Empire, or by some arrangement with the Porte.

“ As a proof of his desire to maintain peace, he wished to know what he had to gain by going to war with England. A descent was the only means of offence he had, and that he was determined to attempt, by putting himself at the head of the expedition. But how could it be supposed that after

having gained the height on which he stood, he would risk his life and reputation in such a hazardous attempt, unless forced to it by necessity, when the chances were that he and the greatest part of the expedition would go to the bottom of the sea. He talked much on this subject, but never affected to diminish the danger. He acknowledged that there were one hundred chances to one against him; but still he was determined to attempt it, if war should be the consequence of the present discussion; and such was the disposition of the troops, that army after army would be found for the enterprise.

“He then expatiated much on the natural force of the two countries. France, with an army of four hundred and eighty thousand men, for to this amount it is, he said, to be immediately completed, all ready for the most desperate enterprises; and England, with a fleet that made her mistress of the seas, and which he did not think he should be able to equal in less than ten years. Two such countries, by a proper understanding, might govern the world, but by their strifes might overturn it. He said, that if he had not felt the enmity of the British Government on every occasion since the Treaty of Amiens, there would have been nothing that he would not have done to prove his desire to conciliate; participation, in indemnities as well as in influence on the Continent, treaties of commerce, in short, anything that could

have given satisfaction, and have testified his friendship. Nothing, however, had been able to conquer the enmity of the British Government, and therefore it was now come to the point, whether we should have peace or war. To preserve peace, the Treaty of Amiens must be fulfilled; the abuse in the public prints, if not totally suppressed, at least kept within bounds, and confined to the English papers; and the protection so openly given to his bitterest enemies [alluding to Georges and persons of that description] must be withdrawn. If war, it was necessary only to say so, and to refuse to fulfil the treaty. He now made the tour of Europe to prove to me that in its present state there was no Power with which we could coalesce for the purpose of making war against France; consequently it was our interest to gain time, and if we had any point to gain, renew the war when circumstances were more favourable. He said, it was not doing him justice to suppose that he conceived himself above the opinion of his country or of Europe. He would not risk uniting Europe against him by any violent act of aggression; neither was he so powerful in France as to persuade the nation to go to war unless on good grounds. He said that he had not chastised the Algerines, from his unwillingness to excite the jealousy of other Powers, but he hoped that England, Russia, and France would one day feel that it was their

interest to destroy such a nest of thieves, and force them to live rather by cultivating their land than by plunder.

“In the little I said to him, for he gave me in the course of two hours but very few opportunities of saying a word, I confined myself strictly to the tenor of your Lordship’s instructions. I urged them in the same manner as I had done to M. de Talleyrand, and dwelt as strongly as I could on the sensation which the publication of Sebastiani’s report had created in England, where the views of France towards Egypt must always command the utmost vigilance and jealousy. He maintained that what ought to convince us of his desire of peace, was on the one hand the little he had to gain by renewing the war, and on the other the facility with which he might have taken possession of Egypt with the very ships and troops which were now going from the Mediterranean to St. Domingo, and that with the approbation of all Europe, and more particularly of the Turks, who had repeatedly invited him to join with them for the purpose of forcing us to evacuate their territory.

“I do not pretend to follow the arguments of the First Consul in detail; this would be impossible, from the vast variety of matter which he took occasion to introduce. His purpose was evidently to convince me that on Malta must depend peace or

war, and at the same time to impress upon my mind a strong idea of the means he possessed of annoying us at home and abroad.

“ With regard to the mistrust and jealousy which he said constantly prevailed since the conclusion of the Treaty of Amiens, I observed, that after a war of such long duration, so full of rancour, and carried on in a manner of which history has no example, it was but natural that a considerable degree of agitation should prevail : but this, like the swell after a storm, would gradually subside, if not kept up by the policy of either party ; that I would not pretend to pronounce which had been the aggressor in the paper war of which he complained, and which was still kept up, though with this difference, that in England it was independent of Government, and in France its very act and deed. To this I added, that it must be admitted that we had such motives of mistrust against France as could not be alleged against us, and I was going to instance the accession of territory and influence gained by France since the treaty, when he interrupted me by saying ‘ I suppose you mean Piedmont and Switzerland ; “ *ce sont des bagatelles* : ” and it must have been foreseen whilst the negotiation was pending ; “ *vous n’avez pas le droit d’en parler à cette heure*. ” I then alleged as a cause of mistrust and jealousy the impossibility of obtaining justice, or any kind of redress, for any

of His Majesty's subjects. He asked me in what respect : and I told him that since the signing of the treaty, not one British claimant had been satisfied, although every Frenchman of that description had been so within one month after that period ; and that since I had been here, and I could say as much of my predecessors, not one satisfactory answer had been obtained to the innumerable representations which we had been under the necessity of making in favour of British subjects and property detained in the several ports of France and elsewhere, without even a shadow of justice : such an order of things, I said, was not made to inspire confidence, but, on the contrary, must create distrust. This, he said, must be attributed to the natural difficulties attending such suits, when both parties thought themselves right ; but he denied that such delays could proceed from any disinclination to do what was just and right. With regard to the pensions which were granted to French or Swiss individuals, I observed that they were given as a reward for past services during the war, and most certainly not for present ones, and still less for such as had been insinuated, of a nature repugnant to the feelings of every individual in England, and to the universally acknowledged loyalty and honour of the British Government. That as for any participation of indemnities, or other accessions which His Majesty might have obtained, I could take

upon myself to assure him, that His Majesty's ambition led him rather to preserve than to acquire. And that with regard to the most propitious moment for renewing hostilities, His Majesty, whose sincere desire it was to continue the blessings of peace to his subjects, would always consider such a measure as the greatest calamity; but that if His Majesty was so desirous of peace, it must not be imputed to the difficulty of obtaining allies; and the less so, as those means which it might be necessary to afford such allies, for perhaps inadequate services, would all be concentrated in England, and give a proportionate increase of energy to our own exertions.

"At this part of the conversation he rose from his chair, and told me that he should give orders to General Andréossy to enter on the discussion of this business with your Lordship; but he wished that I should at the same time be made acquainted with his motives and convinced of his sincerity rather from himself than from his Ministers. He then, after a conversation of two hours, during the greatest part of which he talked incessantly, conversed for a few moments on indifferent subjects in apparent good-humour, and retired.

"Such was nearly, as I can recollect, the purport of this conference.

"It must, however, be observed, that he did not, as M. Talleyrand had done, effect to attribute

Colonel Sebastiani's mission to commercial motives only, but as one rendered necessary, in a military point of view, by the infraction by us of the Treaty of Amiens.

“ I have the honour to be, &c.,

(Signed) “ WHITWORTH.”

“P.S.—This conversation took place on Friday last, and this morning I saw M. de Talleyrand. He had been with the First Consul after I left him, and he assured me that he had been very well satisfied with the frankness with which I had made my observations on what fell from him. I told him, that without entering into any farther detail, what I had said to the First Consul amounted to an assurance, of what I trusted there could be no doubt, of the readiness of His Majesty's Ministers to remove all subjects of discussion, where that could be done without violating the laws of the country, and to fulfil strictly the engagement which they had contracted, in as much as that could be reconciled with safety of the State. As this applied to Malta and Egypt, he gave me to understand that a project was in contemplation, by which the integrity of the Turkish Empire would be so effectually secured as to do away with every cause of doubt or uneasiness, either with regard to Egypt or any part of the Turkish dominions. He could not then, he said,

explain himself farther. Under these circumstances no one can expect that we should relinquish that assurance which we have in hand, till something equally satisfactory is proposed and adopted.

(Signed) "WHITWORTH."

"The Right Hon. LORD HAWKESBURY."

&c.

&c.

&c.*

* The translators have referred, for the exact text of the two despatches given above, to the official publication entitled, "Papers relative to the Dissension with France, presented by His Majesty's Command to Parliament in 1803," and printed by R. G. Clarke, Cannon Row, Westminster.

CHAPTER XV.

Commencement of hostilities—Severe treatment of the English in France—The First Consul's anger with England is shared by the great Bodies of the State—Disloyal conduct of the English Government towards France—French troops enter the Kingdom of Naples and occupy Hanover—A stricter etiquette is established by the First Consul—A Theatrical representation at the Palace of St. Cloud is followed by the delivery of an Ode composed by M. de Fontanes—Adoption of the first chapters of the Civil Code—Remarkable share taken by the First Consul in the debates on this work—His journey to Belgium—Servility shown towards him by the authorities, Civil, Military, and Clerical—Disgust felt by the Parisians at such excessive flattery—The first Consul's onward progress towards supreme power—He causes propositions to be made to Louis XVIII., who declines his offers—Dissensions between Napoleon and his brothers—Disagreement between France and Russia—First preparations for an invasion of England—M. de Fontanes, President of the Legislative Body—Re-imposition of taxes on food, under the name of *droits-réunis*.

HOSTILITIES followed quickly on the rupture. The English began them. Scarcely had the ambassadors of the two nations crossed the Channel before an order-in-council was issued authorising the pursuit

of all French vessels and laying an embargo on those then lying in English harbours. English frigates immediately seized on some merchant vessels in the Bay of Andierne.* The First Consul replied by a violent measure, and one against all the usages of war. An act of the Government† ordered the arrest and imprisonment of all Englishmen over eighteen, and under sixty years of age, then in France; all subjects of the king of England between those ages being considered as forming part of the English militia. This measure was carried out with the utmost rigour, and the English who thus became prisoners of war were deprived of their liberty for more than ten years; they regained it only in 1814.

The various documents relating to the measures of hostility adopted by the two Governments, were communicated to the Council of State in the sitting of the 3rd Prairial (May 23). But this was a merely

* The orders-in-council of which I am now speaking are dated May 16, 1803 (26th Floréal, year XI.).

† I would call attention to the fact that, in the month of Pluviôse of this year, the names of the Consuls cease to appear in the titles of the public acts of the Government. From this time they were drawn up in the name of the *Government of the Republic*. Until then they had been intituled: *The Consuls of the Republic*, which formula disappeared in all acts of high administration or of general interest. Nominations to places continued to bear the name of the First Consul. The motives for this change are sufficiently apparent.

formal communication. The Government decree had been passed on the previous day, and was already being put into execution. Advice was neither wanted nor asked for. Moreover, it would not have been needed; irritation had reached its highest pitch.

About the First Consul nothing was talked of but a war of extermination and Revolutionary measures. A struggle to the death was commencing, and even Bonaparte's brothers were carried away, forsaking all moderation, and sharing this feeling of deepest resentment. It was the same with the highest bodies in the State. The Senate, the Legislative Body and the Tribunate vied with each other by the speeches of their several members in protestations of devotion and in pledges to support a war which involved the national honour. The three institutions afterwards proceeded in a body to the First Consul and solemnly renewed the protestations they had just made within their own walls. The English Government was accused of bad faith in the negotiations and of having falsified the papers laid before Parliament in justification of the declaration of war.* No means were neglected of inflaming

* The French Government caused a remarkable article to be inserted in the 'Moniteur' of the 4th Prairial, upon the communications made to Parliament by the English Government. This article quoted as an instance of the highest pitch of impudence and even of folly, an alteration in one of the

and increasing animosity, more factitious, it is true, than real, but which was expressed with unbridled violence. England on her side did not give an

most important notes sent over by Lord Whitworth, that one which bears date May 10, and in which the entire paragraph relating to the proposed cession of Malta to Russia was suppressed. True enough, at the first glance, the suppression seemed inexplicable and might lead to the belief, as the article in the 'Moniteur' pointed out, that the intention of the English Government had been to conceal an important part of the negotiations. But this accusation lost all its weight on a careful examination of the papers laid before Parliament, and afterwards printed. They contained in full Lord Hawkesbury's despatch to Lord Whitworth, in which the proposition to hand Malta over to Russia was named, discussed, and rejected as inadmissible, on account of Russia's refusal to garrison the island. This despatch, dated May 7, was inserted in the English parliamentary papers as No. 68, and contained the following phrase: "The French Government proposes that His Majesty should yield Malta to a Russian, Austrian, or Prussian garrison. If His Majesty were disposed to abate his demand to occupy the island temporarily, the Emperor of Russia would be the only sovereign, under present conditions, to whom the King would consent that Malta should be ceded. But His Majesty is informed that the Emperor of Russia would decline to garrison the island." This last assertion might not be correct; although in the French documents, as I have said, there is nothing to prove that Russia had formally consented to occupy Malta, and all they contain is a further promise of mediation and of guarantees of peace. But it was not the less certain that the English Government could not be accused of wishing to conceal from Parliament and from the country the offers of France and the reasons of their refusal by the English Cabinet. The accusation was, therefore, illogical at least. But it passed without notice or remark.

example of greater moderation. She seized on ships at sea before the declaration of war could be known. Abuse and defamation of France, and of the family of her First Magistrate, filled the columns of the English newspapers, and not satisfied with declaring an open war against us, she waged a secret war very dishonourable to the English Government. She hired assassins, paid agents to promote agitation, fostered internal conspiracies, carried treachery and revolt wherever her gold could reach, and gave to the animosity which is justified by open war between two rival nations, that odious character of treason and disgraceful machination which is dishonouring to the most legitimate warfare, and which is reprobated by morality as well as by the Law of Nations, recognised in Europe, whosoever may be the enemy to be encountered.

The First Consul feeling himself more at liberty since the declaration of war, and holding everything allowable in self-defence, set about extending his conquests on the Continent by way of compensation for the losses inflicted on our navy and our commerce. French troops re-entered the Kingdom of Naples; Hanover was invaded, and barely five weeks had elapsed from the commencement of hostilities when all the coast of Italy on the Mediterranean, and the ocean coasts from Andaye to the mouth of the

Elbe were in the hands of the French, and closed against the English.

While these military operations were taking place with all the rapidity which characterised the First Consul's method of carrying out the projects conceived by his daring genius, he was preparing to visit Belgium, that he might confirm the inhabitants of that wealthy country in their obedience, and strengthen their confidence in him at the beginning of a war which was so contrary to their interests and so destructive to their commerce. But in order, as it were, to prepare the public mind for the submission and the homage towards himself and his consort that he intended to exact during this journey, he held himself more than ever aloof from the other Consuls, and established a more marked difference between himself and his colleagues. The palace of St. Cloud had now become a punctilious Court, and access to it was rendered almost impossible by a rigid etiquette. A theatre was erected, and the performances, given by actors from Paris, were in all things regulated by the former ceremonial. The Diplomatic Body was invited in State; the First Consul sat alone in a large box on the right of the theatre, his aides-de-camp and officers on duty stood at the back. A similar box on the opposite side was reserved for Madame Bonaparte, attended by her ladies-in-waiting. Others were occupied by the

Cónsuls, Ministers, Ambassadors and their wives. Everyone rose on the entrance of the First Consul and his wife, who bowed graciously to the assembly. The performances were heard in silence, without applause. I was present at one, on Sunday the 23rd Prairial (June 12), and in addition to the novelties of etiquette which I have just described, the performance was marked by a curious circumstance.

The play was *Esther*. After the tragedy the curtain was lowered; the spectators were about to leave the theatre, when the curtain was again raised. An actor made his appearance, with a roll of paper in his hand, and read an ode composed by M. de Fontanes. Some boldness was required to read verses to ears in which the enchanting harmonies of Racine's verses were still echoing. But that boldness was not so offensive as the subject of the poem. M. de Fontanes' ode was a bitter diatribe against the English, a pompous exaggeration of our successes and their defeats. I was on thorns the whole time, and, with the great majority of the audience, I considered it contrary to all propriety that the Corps Diplomatique should have been invited to listen to abusive satire on a nation with whom their respective Governments were at peace. I afterwards learned that the poem had been recited by the express order of the First Consul, who had read it, and had even required the author, who did it willingly enough, to

make some alterations, not to soften the text, but, on the contrary, to increase the strength and point of certain passages.

Meanwhile, amid the commotion caused in the Government Councils by the rupture with England and the consequences it entailed, and amid the revival of etiquette and the puerilities of ceremonial, which the First Consul combined with the loftiest conceptions of war and policy, measures of administration and legislation which deserved the gratitude of the whole nation, were being carried out. The session of the Legislative Body had been employed in passing the first chapters of the Civil Code, and the continuous attention given by the First Consul to the debates on that admirable work, was an additional proof of the flexibility with which his genius could adapt itself to labours that demanded the application of faculties of the most opposite kind. The Code will ensure him to the end of Time a distinguished place among celebrated law-givers. Doubtless he received much assistance from men experienced in jurisprudence, but the selection he made of those men, without respect to political party, was in itself worthy of the highest praise. But besides this, he carefully followed the debates, and frequently threw a light on difficult questions, regarding them sometimes from a novel point of view, and with sagacity that astonished his councillors. One day in each

week, the Thursday, was devoted to these debates in the Council of State, and Bonaparte was seldom absent from the sitting. The Civil Code is an exceedingly remarkable production, not only because it attains perfection as nearly as it is possible for the work of a human mind aided by experience and the progress of knowledge to attain it, but also because the period at which that Code saw the light, combined all the conditions proper to ensure such perfection. Former prejudices were destroyed, new ones did not yet exist. At an earlier date the Civil Code would have been *coloured* with Revolutionary ideas; later, when Bonaparte entirely abjured the Revolution to return to the antique Monarchy, his reversion to the past would have introduced into the composition traces of despotism, of feudalism and of the nobiliary principles revived by him, and which reappear only too plainly in the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Proceedings which were drawn up under the Empire. These are unfortunately tempered by the necessities of the position he had taken up, of the absolute power which he had usurped.

The Session of the Legislative Body of year XI. had been closed on the 8th Prairial (28 May), only a few days after the adoption of the title of the Civil Code which treats of marriage, and after the communications that had ensued on the declaration of

war. The Tribunate also had ceased to meet, and all legislative discussion being thus suspended, the First Consul was at liberty to leave Paris.

He set out on the 5th Messidor (June 24) for Belgium.* In the 'Moniteur' of that month, will be found the addresses which were presented to him, and accounts of his reception in the towns and even the villages through which he passed. Never had adulation been carried so far, and it is worthy of remark, that the flattery of bishops and other high clergy surpassed even that of the civil and military authorities. Almost equal homage was offered to Madame Bonaparte, and had the First Consul in making this journey merely wanted to test the servility of Frenchmen and Belgians, he must have been quite satisfied. He returned convinced that he might venture on anything, and made haste to act on the discovery.

I took advantage of the First Consul's absence to join Joseph Bonaparte, who, with his wife and his

* He passed one day with his brother Joseph, at Morfontaine. He was preceded by a Prefect of the Palace, who was furnished with a list of the persons who were to be invited to Morfontaine; on that list there was not a single friend of the master of the house. There were two tables, and the First Consul refused to admit to his own the ladies who had accompanied his mother and his sister Madame Bacciochi to Morfontaine; he admitted only the ladies in attendance on Madame Bonaparte, his wife.

sister-in-law, Madame Bernadotte, was passing the season at Plombières. Stanislas Girardin and Fréville were there also, and we made several excursions together in the Vosges, to the Lakes of Gerardmer and Longemer, and also to the Ballon d'Alsace. The aspect of those mountains and of the smiling valleys of the Moselle made a much more pleasing impression on me than the mingled admiration and awe evoked by the wild majesty of the Alps and the mountains of Corsica.

I returned to Paris in the early part of Thermidor (end of July). The First Consul was still absent, but his return was expected every day. Although my absence had been short, I perceived a considerable change in public opinion, and that if the homage rendered to the First Consul during his journey had added to his greatness in the countries through which he passed, it had produced quite a contrary effect in Paris. The excessive flattery, the almost divine honours he had exacted, or at least had been willing to receive, had greatly alienated the Parisians from him, and had inspired feelings akin to disgust in the more sensible inhabitants of the capital. It was even asserted that the Chief Judge had been obliged * to modify several reports from

* The Ministry of Police had been suppressed in the preceding year, and its business had been added to that of the Chief Judge or Minister of Justice.

police agents which contained a too faithful account of the insulting language used in public places, reports which, had they reached the First Consul, would have presented too strong a contrast to the acclamations that had delighted him at every stage of his journey.

Bonaparte arrived at St. Cloud on the 24th Thermidor (August 12); on the 27th he came to Paris and received the civil and military authorities in great state. He was overwhelmed with speeches and harangues.* In the evening there were illuminations and a concert in the gardens of the Tuileries. The First Consul appeared on the centre balcony and was vociferously greeted. There was no great crowd, however, and there was but little general excitement and no gaiety.

At this epoch the First Consul seriously occupied himself in the realisation of the great projects he had conceived long before, and which seemed easy of execution since his progress in Belgium. This is, therefore, a fitting place in which to describe his mode of developing those plans, and the variations which he made in them. For although the goal to

* The Tribune had at first resolved to go in a body to Dammartin to meet the First Consul, and to express their wishes in the following terms: "The Tribune votes that the Consular dignity shall be hereditary in the Bonaparte family." But the First Consul objected to this. His motives will be seen hereafter.

be reached was always that of supreme power, accompanied by a style and a title that should place him on a level with the other sovereigns of Europe, Bonaparte wavered long as to the system he should adopt, and the title by which he should be designated. Although it was generally believed that the securing of hereditary power in his family was a part of his plan, he was at first far from holding it as a principle, and he did not resolve on adopting it until he became aware that on such conditions only would the Senate consent to invest him with sovereignty. Heredity was the soundest guarantee which that body could obtain against the dangers of an uncertain succession, by which its own prosperous existence would have been endangered. For the details on this subject which I am about to give, and which I learned and noted down almost daily, I am indebted to Joseph Bonaparte, who kept me informed of every little circumstance that occurred. These details will reveal some of the drawbacks of greatness, and the heavy price at which it must be bought. And if, in my narrative, the hero and his family sometimes appear in an unfavourable light, it is because historical truth places them in that position. No spirit of satire shall pervade my story, but neither will I seek to disguise the truth respecting any of the characters in it. Ambition may perhaps be taught a useful lesson by my history of

past events if it should ever seek such a lesson, or would be willing to profit by it. Bonaparte's first step was an overture to Louis XVIII., made at the beginning of 1803. Either the First Consul, shortly after the battle of Marengo, in October 1800, had really received a letter from that Prince, as Joseph Bonaparte assured me at the time, and that its contents had led him to hope for success in the proposal he was now about to make; or he was led to take this step on account of the advantage he would have derived from a renunciation of the throne of France, which, by rallying all the Royalists round him, would smooth his own way to it. At all events, it is certain that in the month of Pluviôse, year XI. (February 1803), he had a proposal conveyed to Louis XVIII., who was then residing at Warsaw, that he should renounce his rights to the crown and require a like renunciation from the members of his family.* On these conditions the King was to receive a pension of two millions (francs) a year. The proposition was rejected by Louis XVIII., and his reply, dated February 26, 1803, is as noble as it is firm. It was published in all the English news-

* It was believed at the time, in Paris, that this proposition had been made through the medium of Prussia, and that conjecture was correct. It will be seen hereafter how the First Consul represented this step, in his speech to the Council of State on the 3rd Germinal, year XII. (March 24, 1804), on the occasion of the death of the Duc d'Enghien.

papers, accompanied by the adhesion of all the princes of the House of Bourbon then living.*

This negotiation, which, had it succeeded, would have given a certain colour of legality to Bonaparte's ascent of the Throne, having failed through resistance as generous as it was unexpected, he withdrew into himself, and relied only on his own genius and lucky audacity for the accomplishment of his designs. But what is to be the form of the new monarchy that he intends to found? Joseph Bonaparte spoke on this subject to Girardin, Fréville and me, during our stay at Plombières in the following terms :—

“To reign alone and to assume a title which shall harmonise with those borne by the heads of European States is with my brother a fixed idea. His letter to the pretender, his whole conduct, the honours which he had paid to him, those he exacts for his wife, are the results of calculation, and intended to familiarise public opinion with, and prepare it for, the great change that is impending. He believes that his best course is to obtain, from the docility and weakness of a populace that in his heart he despises for its servility, all that a sovereign can exact, before he assumes a sovereign's title; for he is convinced that when once the reality of power is obtained, the step which will confer a denomina-

* See the ‘Morning Chronicle’ of July 25, 1803.

tion of that power is easy. He has hesitated long between the titles of King and Emperor, but has at last decided on the latter. In the public opinion of Europe generally, the idea of a King implies a power, modified to a certain extent by an aristocracy, an intermediate caste, and an order of succession which compensates by its security and stability for the disadvantages of arbitrary power. He who bears the name of King is himself fettered, he is restrained by customs which he cannot always bend to his caprice; and an established system of heredity, by naming the successor beforehand, rallies malcontents round the heir-apparent and gives rise to hopes which are independent of the actual ruler.

“Such a system does not suit my brother. He intends that, with the exception of himself, all shall be equal; that his head only shall rise above the level at which all others without distinction shall remain; that no intermediate body shall interfere with his authority; that the peace and repose conferred on the nation shall be so exclusively his work that the imagination can conceive nothing but trouble and confusion on looking beyond him; that uncertainty as to his successor will embarrass contending parties; and lastly, that the power of appointing or changing that successor will be a powerful means of encouraging the hopes of the ambitious, and of attaching to himself all those whose fame or

whose influence on public opinion might render them dangerous enemies, by the hope of so great an inheritance which he will dangle before their eyes.

“The title of Emperor and the ideas formerly associated with that title, and which he intends to revive, suit those views. No heredity, no reigning family, no intermediate caste! No obstacles during his life to be offered by the ambition of military leaders; because, being their master in the art of war, he has no dread of their renown, which is surpassed by his own, and because he leaves them the hope of obtaining after his death the position he has created and occupies. No resistance from the State Bodies of which he is even now head, according to the present order of things! No apparent changes in that order; the Senate is to remain. Presided over by himself, and the submissive instrument of his will, that body will be responsible for the phantom of National Representation that may still be suffered to exist. Lastly, even the word Republic may survive. The vain semblance of that form of Government will still console those who go straying about trying to realise the dream of it in the midst of a frivolous and corrupt people, ruined by seductive theories.”

These intentions of the First Consul, and especially his aversion to a hereditary system, which would have associated his family with his own greatness, were deeply displeasing to his brothers, and were the

origin of the dissension and enmity that shortly afterwards broke out among them. The First Consul wished to make one of them Chancellor of the Senate, an office instituted by the *Senatus-Consultum* of the 14th Nivôse of that year. But both Joseph and Lucien, to each of whom the post was offered, obstinately refused it. They regarded the offer as merely a method of eluding promises that had been made to them, and of removing them from the supreme rank, by appointing them to functions, which mere Senators without any pretensions to such rank could as easily fulfil. Bonaparte's brothers conceived that by accepting they would have thrown in their lot with the crowd from which it was their ambition to separate themselves. On their refusal, the celebrated geometrician Laplace was appointed, and performed the duties of his post with a blind submission which never failed, until fortune turned against his benefactor; then he found an opportunity of placing his officious suppleness at the service of the Bourbons.

When Joseph Bonaparte informed me that he had been offered the Chancellorship of the Senate, and that he was determined to decline it, I tried in vain to induce him to accept a position which was to my thinking by no means derogatory. But I could not overcome his resistance, which was encouraged by his brother Lucien with every argument that

his fertile mind and his own inflexibility of purpose could suggest. My attempts to soothe his extreme indignation failed utterly. "He shall deceive me no longer," he exclaimed; "I am sick of his tyranny, of his vain promises, so often repeated and never fulfilled. I will have all or nothing; let him leave me in my privacy, or offer me a position which will secure power to me when he is gone! In that case I would bind myself, I would pledge myself. But if he refuses this, let him expect nothing from me! Is not the fatal power that he exercises over France, over Europe, which his insatiable ambition has disturbed, enough for him, without his dragging me after him as his slave, proposed first to the respect, and then to the scorn of his generals,* who, taking no orders but from him, will either trample me under foot, or bear my train, according to their master's orders? What has he done for us as yet? What powers has he conferred on us? A prefect in my Department sets me at nought, and I have not the slightest influence in the district where I am a landowner. But I am a man, and I intend him to discover that there are some who dare to refuse submission to his caprices. Let him once more

* The "leaders" of the Senate, instituted by the *Senatus-Consultum* before mentioned, were to be chosen from among the Generals, and took precedence over the two great officers, the Chancellor and the Treasurer.

drench Europe with blood in a war that he could have avoided, and which, but for the outrageous mission on which he sent his Sebastiani, would never have occurred! As for me, I shall join Siéyès, even Moreau, if need be—in short, every patriot or lover of liberty who is left in France—to escape from such tyranny!”

These words, uttered with deep emotion, revealed all the agitation of his soul. I discerned in them vehement indignation, excusable, no doubt, but strongly tinged by an excessive ambition which he disguised perhaps even from himself, although he could not endure the idea that it was always to be disappointed.

This ebullition of passion was followed by confidential revelations. He told me that, wishing to induce his brother to adopt the hereditary principle, he had pressed him to put away his wife and to marry again, and that he had recapitulated the various arguments in favour of this proceeding which had been discussed in our former conversations. Then he added these remarkable words: “You hesitate?” said I, to the First Consul; “well, what will be the consequence? Why, that should any natural cause bring about the death of your wife, you will pass for her poisoner in the eyes of France, in those of Europe, and in mine, who know you well! Who is there that will believe that you have not done what

it was so clearly your interest to do? It is better to forestall these disgraceful suspicions. You are not really married; you have never consented to have your union with this woman consecrated by the Church. Leave her for political reasons, and do not let it be believed that you have got rid of her by a crime."

"I saw my brother turn pale," continued Joseph, "at this, and he answered me in these words: 'You make me conceive that which I should never have thought of, the possibility of a divorce. But towards whom, in such a case, should I turn my thoughts?' 'Towards a German Princess,' I replied, 'or the sister of the Emperor of Russia. Only take this step, and you change your own position at once, and ours, without our even having to wait for the birth of a child. All is settled by that alone, the family system is established, and we are all on your side.'"

This advice, which was partly acted on afterwards, did not suit the private purposes then entertained by the First Consul. It was indeed natural that he should reject it so long as he continued averse to the hereditary system, and in addition to the motives I have already set forth, his objections were supported by his wife and the other Consuls, who were naturally and strongly opposed to a scheme of the kind. It must be admitted besides that the circumstances of the Bonaparte family were by no means

favourable to the establishment of the hereditary principle. Its chief was united to a woman who could not bear him a child; his eldest brother Joseph had no son, and Lucien had just married * Madame Joubertson, the divorced wife of a Paris stockbroker, by whom he had had a child in the previous year. He had therefore bestowed the name of Bonaparte on a woman whose beauty and wit were indeed remarkable, but whose reputation was not spotless in the eyes of the First Consul. Jérôme, the youngest of the brothers, had married while in America, and before attaining his majority, a Miss Patterson, the daughter of one of the richest citizens of Baltimore, and belonging to a respectable family in the United States, but the lady was, in the estimation of the First Consul, far below the rank to which he afterwards raised his young brother. Louis alone had contracted a union with the approval of his brother Napoleon; he had married Hortense Beauharnais, the daughter of Madame Bonaparte, and she had borne him a son, for whom the First Consul displayed so special an affection, that it gave rise to the most scandalous reports. After the unfortunate expedition to St.

* In the beginning of Brûmaire, year XII. (end of October, 1803). Lucien was a widower, he had two daughters by his first wife.

Domingo,* his widow, Pauline Bonaparte, had married Prince Borghese,† and this was the only side on which the Bonapartes were connected with the great families of Europe. But that alliance, although illustrious, was not available in the sense of the establishment of heredity.

Lucien's marriage had thrown the whole family into consternation, and Joseph himself looked upon it as a serious personal calamity. How, indeed, would it be possible to confer rights over France on this son of Lucien, to claim for him her homage, to set him on the Throne, perhaps on some future day, when he was only made legitimate by the tardy marriage of his parents? "Destiny!" exclaimed Joseph, "Destiny seems to blind us, and intends, by means of our own faults, to restore France some day to her former rulers." ‡

The First Consul, who was furiously indignant at Lucien's conduct, was at first for using harsh measures against him and his newly made wife.

* It completely failed, and the reverse was attributed chiefly to the incapacity of General Leclerc, who was in command.

† The marriage was celebrated privately at Morfontaine, in the beginning of Vendémiaire, year XII. (end of September, 1803). Stanialas, Girardin, and myself were witnesses at the legal ceremony.

‡ These prophetic words were spoken to me at Morfontaine on the 5th Brumaire, year XII. (Oct. 28, 1803). I wrote them down on the same day.

But the uncertainty of success, the fear of the scandal that would be caused by law proceedings to break the marriage, or by an arbitrary arrest, and lastly, the attitude taken by Lucien, who seemed disposed to defend himself publicly, made the First Consul relinquish an idea conceived in the heat of passion, and induced him to resort to a negotiation which Joseph undertook. It was agreed that the latter should endeavour to persuade Lucien to write a letter to his brother, in which he would pledge himself not to allow his wife to bear his name, not to introduce her to the family, and to wait for the legal publicity of his marriage, until time and circumstances should permit; this, he was also to pledge himself, should never take place without the authorization of the First Consul. On the other hand Bonaparte would consent to receive his brother Lucien as if nothing extraordinary had occurred, would, after the interview, invite him to a play at St. Cloud, and, moreover, would consent to Lucien's wife residing with her husband.

Furnished with these instructions, Joseph commenced his negotiations, and succeeded in obtaining the letter exacted by the First Consul. But either that letter did not come up to his expectations, or satisfied with having it in his possession, Bonaparte no longer cared to keep his promises, for it is certain that none of the conditions to which he had bound

himself were fulfilled, and the negotiator, indignant at this breach of faith, long and deeply resented it. Lucien took advantage of Joseph's anger to get him to visit his new sister-in-law, and his example was followed by some other members of the family. The First Consul could not forgive Joseph for so acting, and an open quarrel ensued between them which lasted a considerable time. Lucien resolved on leaving France, and set out for Italy on the 13th Frimaire (Dec. 5). On the eve of his departure, he wrote a note to Joseph, which I have read. It was in the following terms. "I am going to Florence, Rome and Naples. I have written to Mechin,* to have Bernadotte presented as a candidate for the Senate.† Do nothing during my absence towards reconciling me with the First Consul. I depart hating him. I leave a courier at your service, in Paris, whom you may despâch to me, if anything occurs." ‡

Thus had discord in the family-circle separated

* The Prefect of the Department of the Landes.

† Nothing could be more distasteful to the First Consul than this nomination. He had at that time a great dislike to Bernadotte; next to Moreau he was the General whom he most dreaded. Lucien Bonaparte, however, did not start immediately, as he had said. He remained in the neighbourhood of Paris, and only set out for Italy in April 1804, when he had been definitively excluded from the Imperial succession.

‡ Lucien and Napoleon did not meet again until 1815, after the Emperor's return from Elba.

its members, and those domestic dissensions which, could not escape the watchful eyes of lookers-on, increased the alienation of public feeling that had already been shocked by such arbitrary acts as the banishment of Madame de Staël from France,* and the dismissal without trial of two assistants of the Mayor of Granville, announced in the 'Moniteur' of the 15th Vendémiaire, year XII., with the addition of the most insulting imputations. Lastly some very ill-timed acts of prodigality, among which were a marriage-portion of two millions bestowed on Princess Borghese, and a magnificent residence in the Faubourg St. Germain given to Eugène de Beauharnais, awoke universal envy and dissatisfaction. To these hostile sentiments, whose expression was restrained

* Madame de Staël had returned to France towards the end of September 1803. She was at once refused permission to live in Paris, and she took up her residence in a country-house near the capital. Shortly afterwards she received an order to leave France. The First Consul himself gave this order in a letter addressed to the Chief Judge, somewhat in the following terms: "I hear that Madame de Staël is in the neighbourhood of Paris. You will see that she receives an order to leave France within four-and-twenty hours, and you will take the necessary steps for the prompt execution of that order. To be accomplished without exposure." (The word *exposure* was scratched out, and *noise* substituted for it.) Matthieu de Montmorency, who displayed under these circumstances a truly courageous friendship for Madame de Staël, appealed to Joseph Bonaparte to endeavour to obtain a revocation of the order from his brother. Joseph was ready and willing, and tried his best, but without success.

with difficulty by the vigilant and effective police, was added great uneasiness caused by the misunderstanding between France and the Northern Powers with which year XII. began. Russia in particular appeared ill-disposed. She announced her intention of supporting Portugal, which was at that time threatened by us. The First Consul was enraged at this interference, which had interrupted the negotiations, until then kept alive by a faint hope of pacification. At the first diplomatic audience of year XII., Sunday, 2nd Vendémiaire (Sept. 25), he was very rude to M. Markoff, and a fortnight later he omitted to invite him to the play at St. Cloud, at which the other ambassadors were present.* M. Markoff, however, being anxious to avoid a complete rupture, looked about for some means of conciliation, and expressed to me his great wish to be placed in communication with Joseph Bonaparte. He complained bitterly of Talleyrand, who, he said, had injured him in the estimation of the First Consul, and who, having speculated on war, wanted to interrupt the mediation of Russia, by preventing the renewal of negotiations which might end successfully. "It cannot be to Russia's interest," he said, "to let the question between France and England be decided in

* The other members of the Russian Embassy, and the Russians of note then in Paris, were invited, but one and all declined the invitation; all made common cause with the ambassador.

favour of either of those Powers. In either hypothesis there will be danger for her ; on the one side of a naval despotism, on the other of a continental despotism. Russia's real interest is to bring about peace. Nor does she wish to impose very hard conditions. I am convinced that all can be arranged on the very basis of the last propositions made by the First Consul.* But I am unable to negotiate ; every path is closed to me ; every means of communication between me and the Russian Ambassador in London has been stopped, though it is indispensable that we should act in concert. I do not, however, aspire to conclude so important a negotiation, I only wish to renew it, and I think I might succeed if I could meet Joseph Bonaparte." I willingly undertook to contrive an interview ; and it took place, but availed nothing. Russia's distrust was increased by the information of a projected alliance, offensive and defensive, between France and Prussia, that was being secretly negotiated in Paris, and every hope that the struggle with England would be terminated by Russia's mediation vanished.

Neither these political difficulties, however, nor the obstacles thrown in his way by the dissensions

* These propositions were made with the object of placing Malta in the hands of Russia, and of accepting the mediation of that Power between England and France.

that had broken out in his family, could arrest the progress of the First Consul. At the same time that he attached the Senate to his own interests by the distribution of the new Senatorships, and that he flattered the national vanity by the distribution of various grades of the Legion of Honour, in which he included all men of mark, whether civil or military, with equal skill and judgment, and all those who had distinguished themselves in Science or Art, he was making astonishingly active preparations for a descent on England. An enormous number of flat-bottomed boats, rafts, gun-boats and vessels of all kinds came forth, as if by magic, from a thousand dockyards. Basins were hollowed out to receive this fleet, wooden forts were erected to defend it. Formidable batteries defended the Channel coast-line and forbade even an attempt from the enemy. Boulogne-sur-Mer was the centre of all these operations. In the early part of year XII., the First Consul visited the town several times, and his presence inspired the soldiers and the workmen with increased zeal. Yet it is doubtful whether he ever seriously intended to attempt this great enterprise. He was too good a judge in matters of the kind not to have recognised how small were the chances of success, and in any case I do not believe that he ever intended to undertake the invasion in person.

to risk his fortune and his life on so slight a probability of victory.* But the imagination of the people required food, and beyond this, a pretext was needed for assembling an immense army at a short distance from the capital, so that, being surrounded by these devoted forces, he might, if necessary, be borne by them to the Throne. It was also well to remove his formidable armies from the eastern frontiers of France, and to crowd them along the coast from Ostend to the mouth of the Somme, so that Austria, emboldened by their departure, might attempt to repair her losses and to avenge the insults she had recently endured, by a sudden aggression, in which victory would seem certain to her. Thus war, the object of all the First Consul's desires—war, which only could save him from the critical position in which he stood—would again break out on the Continent.

The sequel has sufficiently demonstrated the wisdom of these various combinations; but they escaped the notice at the time of even the most

* Towards the end of Brûmaire, on returning from one of his visits to Boulogne, Bonaparte had a conversation with Joseph on the subject of Lucien's marriage, in which he used the following remarkable words: "You think you are necessary while I am absent? Well, what does it matter to me? I will not go to England, I shall send Ney. Besides, there is another resource; I will only make an expedition to Ireland; thus I reduce it all to an ordinary war; I will give back Ireland in return for Malta, and make peace."

astute statesmen. Time alone has thrown light on them. At the period of which I am speaking, no one doubted that the expedition would take place. Whenever the First Consul left Paris, universal anxiety prevailed; every moment we expected to hear that the flotilla had sailed, and when, for the first time, cannon announced Bonaparte's return, it was believed that the salute was fired in honour of our first successes at sea.

Préparations for the expedition, the movement of troops, and the coast-defences did not so entirely engross the attention of the First Consul as to make him neglect internal administration. His astonishing activity sufficed for all things. By a *Senatus-Consultum* of the 28th Frimaire (December 20, 1803) the usual form of opening the sessions of the Legislative Body was changed. For the future, the First Consul was to perform that duty, with a ceremonial imitated from that with which the English Parliament is opened, and to appoint the President of the Legislative Body from among a certain number of candidates. This was one more step towards monarchical forms. He, however, adjourned the alteration of the ceremonial until the following year; the opening took place on the 15th Nivôse, year XII. (January 6, 1804) without any novel formalities. But he hastened to exercise his right of appointing the President. His choice fell

on Fontanes, and he certainly could not have chosen better in his own interests. Never did a man realise more completely the expectations formed respecting him. The imperturbable admirer of all that Bonaparte did or wished to do; so long as that extraordinary man wielded the sceptre, he placed the Body over which he presided, and the nation in whose name he frequently spoke, at the feet of an absolute master, whom he promptly deserted when fortune abandoned him. The appointment of Fontanes met, however, with general disapproval. Even the partisans of the Government were alarmed; they perceived with regret the accessibility of the First Consul to servility and flattery; they regarded the appointment as a reward for the ode that had been recited at St. Cloud, and whose violent declamations against England were all the more offensive as it was generally known that, after the 18th Fructidor, Fontanes had taken money and favours from that country, which had afforded him a secure refuge and generous protection.

The Government being assured, by the new system of the *Senatus-Consultum*, of the subservience of the Legislative Body, and no longer fearing even a shadow of opposition, obtained without difficulty the financial laws for the augmentation of the revenues of the State which the war on which he had entered rendered necessary. In the sitting of the Council

of State on the 7th Nivôse, which preceded by a few days only the session of the Legislative Body, the First Consul presided, made a statement respecting the financial situation of France, and prepared the minds of his hearers with surpassing skill for the necessity of further taxation. The arguments he used for the re-establishment of indirect taxation, which had been abolished ever since the beginning of the Revolution, were as follows:—

“The needs of the State for the current year,” said the First Consul, “will amount to seven hundred millions, and to meet them we have but five hundred and twenty-six millions, viz.,

Direct Taxation	.	.	.	.	.	295 millions.
Registration	.	.	.	.	.	180 „
Customs	.	.	.	.	.	25 „
Post-office	.	.	.	.	.	11 „
Lottery	.	.	.	.	.	12 „
Salt-pans	.	.	.	.	.	3 „
Total						526 „

“We must, besides, deduct from our estimated receipts the sums that are not actually recovered, and those we lose every year through the bankruptcy of Receivers-General. These cannot be estimated at less than four millions. We can barely reckon, therefore, on a receipt of five hundred millions. Thus, it becomes necessary to provide in other ways for what is wanting; not with a view

to reach the seven hundred millions that are necessary to us on account of the war, but to bring up the receipts of the Republic to six hundred or six hundred and fifty millions. It will never be able to hold the rank which its position and the extent of its territory assign to it in Europe without such a revenue.

“In order to obtain this, we must establish a system of finance, and create beforehand a system which, like the excise in England, will enable us to raise indirect taxes, and to establish, as the need arises, new branches of revenue.

“If I consulted my own popularity only, I should not speak of fresh taxation just now. You shall see that, owing to the extraordinary resources procured for us by our influence in Europe, I could perfectly well dispense with it for this year, perhaps even for year XIII., and reckoning, with some reason, on the probability of success in the war in which we are engaged, I might take the credit to myself of carrying on that war without imposing any extra tax. But we must think of the future, we must not place the Republic under the necessity of having recourse, at the first reverse to our arms, to bad financial measures, such as forced loans, war taxes, or additional centimes on the land-tax, which is already burdensome to agriculture.

“Thus, the plan presented to you by the Minister of Finance comprises not only a provision for the

needs of the present year, but further, a scheme for the collection of several branches of indirect taxes, such as a new tax on all kinds of drink, an increased productiveness on tobacco, and other taxes."

After hearing this address, the Council of State decided on the bases of a law which established a new system of taxation on provisions, under the name of Customs.* It was adopted by the Legislative Body on the 5th Ventôse, year XII. (February 25, 1804), and is in full vigour at the present day, although the Government which succeeded that of Napoleon, in order to keep a foolish promise of abolishing that kind of taxation, changed its name to that of "indirect contributions." A clever invention in finance is always sure to prosper.

* *Droits-réunis.*

CHAPTER XVI.

Reconciliation between Napoleon and Joseph Bonaparte—Réal, Councillor of State, is entrusted with the Superintendence of Police—Establishment of General Commissioners of Police in the principal towns of France—Debate on this subject in the Council of State—Plot against the First Consul's life by Georges, Cadoudal, and Pichegru—Complicity of Moreau—Details of the examination of the accused—The Chief Judge's report on the facts of the case is communicated to the Chief Bodies of the State—Their replies—Examination of Moreau's papers by Regnault de Saint Jean-d'Angely and the Author—State of the contributions levied by Moreau in Germany—Plan and intentions of the principal conspirators—Royalist character of the plot—Pichegru and Cadoudal are arrested—The discoveries made by the Police respecting this conspiracy compromise indirectly a great number of persons—Cares and troubles of the First Consul—The Duc d'Enghien is seized at the Château d'Ettenheim in Baden by a detachment of French troops—The Prince is brought before a military commission at Vincennes, is condemned to death, and shot—Consternation in Paris—Bonaparte's speech to the Council of State concerning this event—Ball given by Talleyrand three days after the death of the Duc d'Enghien.

EVERYTHING seemed to succeed with the First Consul; everything, except the enmity of his enemies, seemed to yield before him. In despair of

defeating him on the field of battle, they once more resorted to the weapons they had formerly employed. Conspiracies against his life were formed and subsidized in England. On learning the risks daily incurred by his brother, Joseph Bonaparte's affectionate nature drew him towards the First Consul. The good understanding that had been broken off by family differences was restored, and if it was not entirely proof against some fresh shocks that came to disturb it, yet, for the time at least, the need of sympathy and of giving vent to feeling, had renewed the old confidence on both sides.

In the course of a conversation which took place after their reconciliation, and which lasted late into night of the 30th Nivôse (January 21), the First Consul had freely disclosed his troubles. He made bitter complaints that in his family he met with neither support nor assistance ; and especially blamed his brothers, who took delight in criticising his conduct, in condemning him when he affected monarchical forms, and who, far from seconding any of his projects, made it their business, as it were, to run counter to them all.

"Nor," added he, "do I find more sincerity anywhere about me ; I live in a state of continual distrust ; each day brings forth a fresh plot against my life ; each day I receive more and more alarming reports. The partisans of the Bourbons, as well as

the Jacobins, aim at me only, and as both parties know perfectly well that their only chance is in my destruction, they are at any rate agreed on that one point. For a time I thought I had nothing to fear from the adherents of Louis XVIII., but I have now good reasons for believing that they too are conspiring against me. However, I have made up my mind, I shall try a descent on England. Victory would enable me to carry out anything I wished; while if, on the contrary, I should fall, it matters little to me what happens afterwards!"

The conversation continued long in this melancholy key, and when it was repeated to me on the following day, I could but acknowledge that the alarm of the First Consul was justified. He was so great an obstacle to the hopes which had been revived by the renewal of war; he had done so little to place his family, his partisans, or even the nation, in a position to defend themselves when he should be gone; and he had made himself so much feared and so little loved, that among these numerous elements of enmity, ambition and political combinations, the springing-up of dangerous conspiracies was inevitable.

It followed, therefore, that the need of an active and watchful police was urgent. The First Consul, however, would not re-establish an odious Ministry that he himself had suppressed two years before. But he substituted for it a Councillor of State

pecially charged with the direction of the Police, and Réal, to whom those functions were entrusted, contributed greatly by his activity and penetration to ward off the dangers that threatened the life of Bonaparte and the tranquillity of the State. The appointment of Commissaries-General of Police in the principal towns of France dates from this period, and the latter measure became the subject of a remarkable debate which took place in the Council of State on the 18th Pluviôse. While admitting the inconvenience of having to appeal to the Legislative Body every time that it became necessary to appoint a Commissary-General in any town, the majority of the Councillors of State were of opinion that it was indispensable to obtain a general law from the Legislative Body authorising the Government to appoint those officials according to the wants of the administration. I was strongly in favour of this opinion, as were also the whole section of the Interior of which I was a member. But the First Consul refuted it in the following terms:—

“We are no longer,” said he, “in the period when the Legislative Body could be considered as representing the sovereign, and almost as the sovereign himself. That was the assumption acted on by the Constituent Assembly, and every one knows what misfortunes followed on that system, the confusion of power and authority that resulted from it, and the

abyss into which France was thereby plunged. Let us return to wiser principles! a Legislative Body is, from its nature and composition, unfitted to deal with the administration and to enter into its details. It cannot either know or judge of its requirements; publicity of debate would deprive administrative measures of both the secrecy and the force of opinion which should attend them, and which alone can ensure their success. Only generalities should therefore be submitted to the Legislative Body, and these should be restricted to purely speculative subjects, such as the laws of the Civil Code, and of Procedure, with the addition however of those concerning Taxation, which should always be approved by it.

“By adhering to this system, it is evident that the resistance of the Legislative Body, either to consent to taxation, or to adopt important measures on which public opinion may have pronounced, would have such results that the Government would be obliged either to have recourse to the Senate to dissolve the Legislative Body, or to change its Ministers and its Council, on perceiving itself to have been led astray or carried too far by them. These are great and inevitable crises of which everybody can perceive the advantages and the dangers, and in which the nation is always in a condition to judge between the two parties.

“ But to give to the Legislative Body the power of arresting the operation of the Government in details—and such would be the infallible result of obliging the latter to have recourse to it for those details—is to place the Government in the cruel alternative of either permitting itself to be impeded at every step, and thus to concur in its own gradual destruction, or to have recourse to violent measures not sufficiently justified by the importance of the matter, and which would ruin it in public estimation and favour.

“ This being premised, I understand that, if the Legislative Body refuses a law of the Civil Code, or one concerning the general interests of Society on which opinion may be divided, we must yield and consider ourselves beaten without making any objection. The refusal, therefore, of a tax would alone oblige us to make use of the means of dissolution, because every one knows that such a refusal is a declaration of war against the Government, which in that case must defend its existence.

“ But, in the special case which we are considering, let us suppose that the Legislative Body refuses the particular or general law that we should propose to it; upon this matter, in the first place, we should have made it the judge of the utility of the measure, and, as it cannot be a good judge, in the absence of all information and of all light by which to guide itself in forming an opinion, a grave inconvenience

at once arises; one all the more grave because the Legislative Body is never responsible for its opinion. In the next place, it would have placed us in the alternative of which I have already spoken, by forcing us either to renounce a police measure which we feel to be necessary, or to take the extreme step of dissolving the Legislative Body, a step which should be reserved for extraordinary circumstances, and which in this case would not be recognised as needful.

“The Section of the Interior and Citizen Miot have therefore misapprehended the question in asserting as a principle that we must ask for a law. It is doing no service to the Legislative Body to call upon it to discuss and decide questions on which it can, in reality, have no opinion. This was all very well, when it invaded all the provinces of authority and regarded itself as sovereign. Such foolish theories have now passed away. The Government, the Senate and the Council of State represent the nation equally with the Legislative Body. We must follow the spirit of the Constitution, not the letter, and that Constitution, of which I have been one of the principal architects, never intended to confer on a deliberative assembly, essentially foreign to the administration, an influence on the direction of affairs which it has expressly, for the sake of the peace and stability of Europe, reserved to the Government.”

After so decided a declaration, there was an end to discussion. The project of law was abandoned, and Commissaries-General were appointed by mere acts of the Government in some of the large towns, such as Marseilles, Bordeaux, Lyons, Nantes, &c.

Meanwhile, the Paris police, directed by Réal, were on the track of conspiracies formed in England against the life of the First Consul. They had arrested an individual named Querelle, and this man's revelations had led them step by step to the discovery of the person who had given shelter to the famous Georges Cadoudal, who was known to be in Paris. This person, an inhabitant of St. Leu-Taverny, in the valley of Montmorency, was arrested. But Georges had escaped. At the same time, thirteen men coming from England, and who were deceived by the use of signals, which Querelle, or another accomplice, named Picot, had made known to the police, landed on the coast near St. Valery, and were seized on the spot. In a short time, the prime movers in this vast conspiracy were reached, and the chief leaders, among whom were men hitherto totally unsuspected of a share in it, were discovered.

On the 25th Pluviôse (February 15) an extraordinary sitting of the Council of State was convoked. The Ministers were present. The First Consul presided, and after he had briefly set forth

the leading features of the plot, he proceeded in these words :

“It is with great pain that I have now to tell you that some illustrious names are concerned in this conspiracy. That Pichegru, already accused and convicted of treason to his country, should have consented once more to serve our enemies, does not surprise me. But that General Moreau should have joined him, that they should have abjured their former enmity, to attack me in concert and overturn the Government, is what I could never have supposed, and have only come to believe after a long investigation. Unfortunately there is no longer room for doubting this complicity ; Pichegru has been in Paris for some days past. His purpose in coming was to guide the assassins, to rally the malcontents together, and to prepare a disturbance, and Moreau has seen him, has had several interviews with him. I know, in particular, that they met on Monday last (February 13) on the Boulevard, near the Madeleine. A man named Lajolais, whose wife was for a long time Pichegru’s mistress, and at whose house in Paris he lodged, acted as a go-between for the two Generals, and arranged their interviews. I have had Moreau arrested. Lajolais and some other persons implicated are also in custody. Pichegru is followed.

“The Government has not acted on suspicion or

vague alarms. Both writings and avowals are in our hands. The whole procedure will be conducted by the Tribunals, and everybody will be enabled to convince himself of the reality of the plot, and of the complicity of the persons I have named.

“All this is the work of England. I am astonished, however, that England has been able to bribe such men. Because, after all, is not Pichegru the conqueror of Holland? Is not Moreau renowned for his victories? Was it not Dumouriez who first conquered Belgium? Is it not inexplicable that they could sacrifice so much glory to the passions of a party, which, if it ever gets the mastery, will but tarnish that glory, and bring to shame those who have gained it?

“I have summoned the Council of State and the Ministers, to explain to them the causes of an event which is sure to make a great sensation, and to give them the means of informing public opinion, and of preventing it from going astray, or beyond the reality.

“Things are not yet sufficiently advanced for me to make them the matter of a message to the different State bodies. Before making the affair more public, we must wait until the course of procedure shall have discovered further facts, which will remove all possibility of doubt from even the most ill-disposed minds.”

No one having spoken after this communication, the First Consul brought the sitting to a close.

The Councillors of State followed him to his Cabinet, to congratulate him on having escaped a fresh danger, and when the conversation afterwards became less restrained, he informed us of several remarkable circumstances. One of the men who had been arrested, after making some important disclosures, had hanged himself. Another, named Bouvet, one of those principally accused, had tried to strangle himself with his sheets, and as most important information was expected from him, it had been found necessary to promise him a pardon, and to send the Chief Judge to him to confirm it, so as to restore him to himself, and calm his excitement. General Moreau had been arrested on the high road, as he was returning from his country-house at Grosbois, by an officer of the Gendarmerie, who entered his carriage and drove with him to the Temple.

On the next day, the 26th Pluviôse, at the sitting of the Council of State, the First Consul, who was presiding, ordered Réal to read to us the result of the examinations of the principal persons accused of the conspiracy. I shall dwell in this place only on the depositions of Bouvet and Lajolais, which refer to Generals Pichegru and Moreau, and which

are still interesting, since they may guide our judgment of these two celebrated men.

Bouvet, whom I mentioned before, was Adjutant-General in the Royalist army of La Vendée. He had come from England and landed on the French coast with Pichegru and Cadoudal, with the sole purpose of supporting the cause of the Bourbons. But he had speedily discovered that he was being tricked by Pichegru, who was working for himself and for Moreau, whom he meant to place at the head of the State with the title of Dictator.

Lajolais' information was more precise. The first part of his examination, in which he declared he had never left France, was, however, a tissue of falsehood. But on being more closely pressed, and perceiving that the truth was already known, in the second part of his examination he confessed everything ; he had been in England and had returned to France with Pichegru in the preceding January, and, together with another person named David,* he had acted as go-between for Moreau and Pichegru. The latter had at first lodged at Chaillot and afterwards in Paris, where he had three interviews with Moreau. The last had taken place on the Boulevard between the Madeleine and the Rue Caumartin. Moreau

* This David had been arrested towards the end of Brûmaire, year XII., at Calais, on his return from England, and removed, in Frimaire, to the Temple, in Paris.

had promised to come to the appointed place at nine o'clock in the evening. He came wrapped in a long coat, wearing a round hat. Lajolais recognised him, and went to apprise Pichegru, who, with Cadoudal, was waiting in a hackney carriage at the end of the Rue Basse-du-Rempart. Lajolais brought Pichegru to Moreau, and they walked together along that part of the Boulevard which is situated between the Rue Neuve-des-Capucines and the Rue Louis-le-Grand, which was out of the space brightly illuminated by the moonlight. Lajolais discreetly withdrew. He did not assert that Cadoudal was a party to this interview.

The Chief Judge, accompanied by the Secretary of the Council of State, had interrogated Moreau on the preceding evening. His answers, which were read to us, consisted merely of denials. He denied that he had seen Pichegru, and even that he knew he was in Paris. This system, which the General himself gave up shortly afterwards, seemed ignoble and unworthy of him.*

Two days later, the Chief Judge's report containing the statement of the facts I have just related, was communicated to the Senate, the Legislative Body and the Tribunal.

* He afterwards relinquished this system of denial, and on the 17th of the following Ventôse he wrote to the First Consul, acknowledging himself guilty of *some acts of imprudence*.

I was present with the Legislative Body on the 27th Pluviôse (February 17) when the report was read, but it was difficult to judge what impression it produced; every one was on his guard. The reply of the President was well written, but full of affected warmth. The orator spoke of Charlemagne, and compared the Founder with the Restorer of the French Empire. When the Councillors of State who had been the bearers of the Message from the Government had withdrawn, the Assembly formed itself into a general Committee. Several orators, Vaublanc, Ramon, Coupé and others, spoke with approval of the measures taken by the Government. On a motion made by them, it was agreed that a deputation should be sent to the First Consul.

On the same Message being read to the Tribunal, General Moreau's brother, who was a member of that body, rushed into the Tribune and made a fiery, but incoherent speech. He accused the Chief Judge's report of being calumnious and untrue, and still more General Murat's* order of the day, which had been promulgated the day before. He strongly asserted Moreau's innocence, proudly recalled the

* General Murat had been made Commandant of Paris on the 24th Pluviôse. The order of the day referred to above is very insulting to Moreau. It was not published in the 'Moniteur,' but may be found in the 'Publiciste' of the 27th Pluviôse.

victories of a hero so unjustly attacked, and ended by demanding judges and a public trial for his brother. Some sensation was produced by this speech. Curée, one of the members of the Tribunal, replied to his colleague, and lauded the extreme feeling he had displayed. Treilhard, a Councillor of State, one of the Government orators, ascended the Tribune a second time, and promised that the proper judges for General Moreau should be entrusted with this important trial.*

On the next day, the 28th Pluviôse, the Council of State was summoned to the First Consul's Cabinet, to be present at the reception of the deputations from the Senate, the Legislative Body and the Tribunal. The discourses of the Senate and the Legislative Body, pronounced by Berthollet, Vice-President of the Senate, and Fontanes, President of the Legislative Body, consisted chiefly of platitudes. The First Consul responded in similar terms; but, for the first time, he read his replies. Hitherto on these occasions he had always spoken extempore.

The address of the Tribunal contained a sort of apology to General Moreau. Not only did it throw doubt on his guilt, but it did not even refer to him as accused, but made use merely of the word 'denunciation.' This speech deeply offended the First Consul,

* The above is reported briefly and incorrectly in the 'Moniteur' of the 28th Pluviôse.

and he allowed his feelings to appear in his reply, which he pronounced extempore. "The greatness of Moreau's former services," he exclaimed, "is not a sufficient motive for removing him from the control of the law. There can be no Government, if a man, by reason of his past services, is to be held to be above the laws, which should apply to him as to the merest private citizen. What! Moreau is already regarded as guilty by the first Bodies in the State, and you do not even treat him as accused!"

On concluding his reply, he abruptly dismissed the deputation from the Tribune, and when it had retired, he continued to converse for some time with us. He was greatly disturbed; his agitation and displeasure were evident.

In the 'Moniteur' of the succeeding day, which contains an account of these deputations, the address from the Tribune was entirely altered. Everything that had offended the First Consul was suppressed, and Moreau's name did not even appear. The article added that the First Consul had replied to the Tribune in almost the same terms as to the Senate and Legislative Body, which, as I have just shown, was far from the truth.

Meanwhile the investigations of the police threw fresh light daily on the conspiracy in which Moreau was implicated, and left no doubt, if not of his guilt,

at least of the fact of his recent intercourse with Pichegru, and his approval of the projects formed for the overthrow of the Consular Government. At the time of the General's arrest, the papers found in his house were handed over to Regnault de Saint Jean-d'Angely, who requested that I might be associated with him in the task of examining them. We therefore undertook this labour jointly, but I could discover nothing in any of the documents which were examined by me that had any reference to the conspiracy under investigation. I found some satires and a few epigrams on Bonaparte and his family in various letters addressed to Moreau by sundry dissatisfied Generals, but they were not worthy of attention, and I said nothing about them. One document was remarkable enough, but as it had no concern with the matter before us, I let it also pass in silence. This was an account of the contributions raised in Germany during the years VIII. and IX. They had amounted to forty-four million francs. Of this sum, nine millions had not been recovered, and various other sums were also missing. In short, the net receipts from these contributions amounted to twenty-four millions paid over to the Paymaster General, and eight millions paid over for Moreau's private use, and of which he had given no account. Of the latter sum, a certain portion, estimated at half, had been spent on secret or extraordinary

service, and distributed as rewards to the Generals and other officers of the army. The surplus had apparently remained in the hands of the Commander-in-Chief.

I was soon relieved from this painful duty. Shortly after Regnault and I had commenced the investigation, the papers were all handed over to General Savary by order of the First Consul, and I heard no more of them.

But I had been made acquainted by this occurrence with some of the reports made by the police, and had an opportunity of forming an opinion on the whole matter, and on Moreau's share in it.

To begin with, I became convinced that the plot against the First Consul's life had really existed; that it had been hatched by partisans of the Bourbons, suborned by England, although no Englishman had taken an active part in it. In the next place, it became equally clear to me that the authors of the conspiracy would not be satisfied with striking at Bonaparte, unless they were provided with a man to put in his place, to occupy the interval that must necessarily exist between the fall of Bonaparte and the restoration of the Bourbons. It was evident that, after striking so great a blow, to leave the result to chance would be to run the risk of allowing their greatest enemies to reap all its fruits. On the death

of Bonaparte, a member of his own family might succeed him; a new convention might be formed; the Republican party might resume the ascendant; the army pronounce in their favour, and thus the Bourbons be permanently, or at least for a long time, put aside. The Royalists therefore required a man who, when Bonaparte was no more, would easily obtain the suffrages both of the army and of the nation, whom the Senate could openly select, and whose appointment would be approved by public opinion. At the same time this man must be one who would hold out greater hopes to the Bourbons than Bonaparte, for he had realised none of the expectations that he had for a moment allowed them to entertain. Moreau, on account of his enmity to Bonaparte, the spell of his victories, the weakness of his character and the laxity of his principles, was the very man that was wanted. Thence the imperative necessity for making sure of him. Pichegru, already in communication with him through the intrigues of David and Lajolais (for he would scarcely have ventured on coming to Paris, if such communications had not taken place), had undertaken the negotiation, and it had succeeded. I did not indeed believe that Moreau had taken any active part in the scheme of assassination; but that he had concerted with Pichegru what was to ensue upon the event, and the means of taking advantage of it,

seemed to me to be beyond a doubt.* I also believed that he had not given his consent to the return of the Bourbons, and that the possibility of retaining the supreme power for himself, or, at the most, of sharing it with Pichegru, had occurred to him, and inspired him with the hope of reaping all the benefits of the crime committed by the partisans of the Bourbons. Thus, he was clearly not working for them, and if he served them, it was without his knowledge. Moreover, Pichegru would probably not have insisted strongly on the point; in the first place, because he recognised the necessity of a less abrupt transition between Bonaparte and the Bourbons; and secondly, because the matter of real importance was to raise Moreau to the first rank, to make sure of his numerous partisans, and above all to get rid of the Bonaparte family and the generals of the army of Italy. I was the more confirmed in my opinion that the coalition between Moreau and the Royalists had been made with that reservation, because, independently of the prize thus offered to Moreau's ambition in the future, he could not doubt that the adherence of a considerable number of his partisans,

* Réal had told me that one of the accused, named Rolland, when under examination said that Moreau, in reply to an overture that had been made to him concerning the plot, had used the following significant words: "Let Pichegru undertake to rid me of the three Consuls and of the Governor; I am sure of the Senate."

and the approval of the Senate must depend on the certainty they would feel that he had no intention of bringing back the Bourbons. Even Cadoudal must have been made a party to the transaction, and must have consented to it; because, although the fall of Bonaparte and the rise of Moreau would not bring about the immediate restoration of the Bourbons, it was nevertheless a great step in their favour. But it had been impossible to confide all these things to Cadoudal's followers, or to make them understand the necessity for this modification. At the first suspicion of an agreement between Moreau and Pichegru which had not for its objects the immediate recall of the Bourbons, they would naturally take alarm and manifest dissatisfaction. In such a conjunction of things, if one of them was apprised of the truth, it followed that he would betray Moreau and Pichegru. This was precisely what occurred on the arrest of Bouvet, who, desiring to labour for the Bourbons only, did not hesitate, on receiving a promise of pardon for himself, to make admissions that implicated Moreau. Without those admissions the General's name would not have appeared in this affair.

Such is the light in which I regarded at that period the whole conspiracy and the machinery which had put it in motion. The sequel confirmed my first impressions, and I now remain convinced that the design and progress of the plot were such as I have

just indicated. The causes of its failure are equally plain. The web, no doubt, was strongly woven, and its ramifications were widely extended; for such men as Dumouriez (who, although he remained in the background, had a great part in its execution) and Pichegru would not have gone so far, if they had not been certain of strong support from within. The readiness with which returned or amnestied *émigrés* accepted places, their influence in the electoral colleges, which they entered in crowds, announced, not indeed their conversion to the system then prevailing in France, or their gratitude to the First Consul, but their hopes of a restoration of the former order of things, and their desire of a complete counter-revolution. If Moreau would have consented to lead the army in the same direction (which his military renown might perhaps have made it easy for him to do) he might have played the part of Monk, for which he was, by character, more fitted than Bonaparte, who had always rejected and despised it. But unity of design was wanting to this great conspiracy. Moreau wanted, by overthrowing Bonaparte, to avenge himself and to usurp his place; he took no account of the Bourbons. The exclusive partisans of the Bourbons desired their restoration only, and would consent to no compromise on that point. The medium party, which hoped either to share the

supreme power with Moreau, or to make use of him, so as to bring back the Bourbons at a later period, stood between the two extremes, and was suspected by both. Thus, so soon as the conspiracy was detected by spies, and one of its members was arrested, the police had but to flatter personal interests, or to excite personal resentments, in order to lay hold of the thread. This was accordingly done, and Moreau appeared on the scene. Pichegru and Georges Cadoudal were betrayed by their own followers, and fell into the hands of the police.* Notwithstanding the suppression of trial by jury in the case of crimes against the State, a suppression that had been decreed by a *Senatus-Consultum*; notwithstanding further modifications in the usual manner of conducting criminal trials, proceedings could only be taken against individuals actually accused of having taken part in the conspiracy, and could not therefore touch all those persons who were indicated by the police reports as being, if not actors, at least secret abettors of the attempt against the existence of the Government and the person of its Chief. The greater number of these were returned *émigrés*, who had

* Pichegru, having been betrayed by a stockbroker named Leblanc, was arrested on the 8th Ventôse in the Rue de Chabanaïs. Georges Cadoudal was arrested on the 18th of the same month, after a desperate resistance. The gates of Paris had been closed for several days, and this measure ensured the capture of Cadoudal.

been sufferers by the events of the 18th Fructidor, year V.; some of them were even members of the Senate.

These discoveries and the suspicions which they excited deprived the First Consul of all repose. His troubles increased daily. The Bourbon Princes were said to be ready to return to France; he was asked to believe that some of them were already in Paris. He was made to feel the impossibility of baffling so many conspiracies by the simple machinery of ordinary law. Some strong measure, some *coup d'État* was needed to bring these constantly recurring troubles to an end, and to tranquillise, not only the partisans of the Revolution, but also members of the old noblesse, and those returned *émigrés*, who, having accepted appointments, in the army, the administration, and even in the household of Bonaparte, all equally dreaded the return of the Bourbons.

The First Consul, thus urged by two opposite parties, who for the moment united to attain a common end, influenced also by the instinct of self-preservation, and above all by the hope of raising an enduring and insurmountable barrier between France and the Bourbons, resolved on striking a decisive blow, for which Talleyrand prepared the way.

It was known in Paris that the Duc d'Enghien

was residing at the castle of Ettenheim, in the Margravate of Baden, with the Princess Charlotte of Rohan-Rochefort. The presence of the Duke in such close vicinity to the French frontier might, in the present difficult conjuncture, be supposed to be a reasonable cause of uneasiness to the Government by contributing to encourage the hopes of its enemies. Nothing therefore could have been more simple than to require from the Margrave of Baden the dismissal of a guest whose presence had become an obstacle to the continuance of a good understanding between the two countries. Such a request would have been reasonable, and doubtless it would not have been refused. But this measure, the only one that justice could approve, was indecisive and insignificant. More than this was required, or at least Bonaparte thought so, to satisfy and tranquillise the few remaining Jacobins and also those members of the nobility who had come over to his side. Talleyrand, who was at the head of the 'noble' party, and at the same time Minister of Exterior Relations, did not shrink from taking steps in the latter capacity to arrive at a far more definite result. He wrote to the Margrave of Baden, in the name of the First Consul, informing him that a detachment of French troops had orders to arrest the Duc d'Enghien, and the letter, which was afterwards published, and some portions of which were known

in Paris at the time, contained the following remarkable sentence. "The conduct of the Bourbons towards the First Consul gives him a right to pursue and to take them in every place, and by any means whatsoever." A false and odious maxim, subversive of the first principles of the rights of man, and of the reciprocal independence of nations!

Canlaincourt, who was ordered to arrest the Duc d'Enghien, set about his task with the greatest despatch. He sent a detachment from the garrison of Strasburg to the castle of Ettenheim. The Prince was taken by force, was removed first to the fortress of Strasburg, and taken from thence, travelling post, to Paris. I heard these particulars on the evening of the 28th Ventôse (March 19) from Joseph Bonaparte, who had been in complete ignorance of the affair until then. We puzzled our brains over the motives of this extraordinary proceeding; we were very far from foreseeing its end.

On the following day, some of the newspapers announced the arrest of the Prince, but the 'Moniteur' made no mention of the fact.

The next morning, the 30th Ventôse (March 21), I, and some of my colleagues, were at Regnault de St. Jean-d'Angely's house; Joseph Bonaparte was there also. We were discussing what ought to be done about the Prince who had been arrested at Ettenheim; and endeavouring to forecast the effect

that would be produced by either severity or clemency. But while we were thus conversing, the fate of him of whom we spoke was already decided ; that unfortunate Prince was no longer in existence.

According to accounts we received while we were still at Regnault's house, the Duc d'Enghien, accompanied by an officer of gendarmerie who had shared his carriage from Strasburg, arrived on the preceding evening at the barrier of Pantin. An officer in command there ordered the carriage to be turned back. Some uncertainty as to the execution of that order had caused a short delay. Finally an orderly officer brought positive instructions that the Prince should be taken to Vincennes. This was done by driving round the outskirts of Paris, along the fortifications. He arrived at his journey's end at seven in the evening, and was imprisoned in the Keep. A few hours later a court-martial* was formed, the Duc d'Enghien was brought before it, and sentence was pronounced on the spot.† The Prince was unanimously condemned to death, taken

* The Court consisted of five officers of the rank of Colonel, a Captain of Gendarmerie acting as reporter, and a Captain of Infantry of the Line as Registrar. Their names are given in the 'Moniteur' of the 1st Germinal. The President of the Court was General Hullin.

† As the sentence was passed after midnight, it is dated the 30th Ventôse, year XII. (March 21, 1804).

at daybreak to the castle moat, and shot by the gendarmes.

It would be difficult to describe the sensation which this occurrence produced in Paris. Disturbance, dismay and consternation prevailed. People did not dare either to speak together or to ask any questions. This first blood shed under circumstances so terrible and revolting, this first stain on a character that until then had been free from all reproach of cruelty, this adoption of the forms of the Revolutionary Tribunals during the Convention, created profound alarm. It looked like a sign of interior change, like the development of evil passions, of which this deed was but a first manifestation. People feared that the First Consul, having once entered on this sanguinary path, would not be able to draw back from it. They trembled to see him surrounded by servile instruments, and judges who were ready to condemn the accused before he had been brought before them. Happily these sinister forebodings were not realised. The blood spilt on that fatal occasion was precious, that cannot be disputed; the sentence was iniquitous; but it is the solitary instance in which, during the whole of his tenure of power, Bonaparte deserved such a reproach.

On being brought before the Court, the Duc d'Enghien had at once admitted that he had borne

arms against France. "I have been proscribed," he said, "for fifteen years, and, having no longer a country, I have made war on France, but I have made it honourably."

He denied that he had any part in the projected assassination of the First Consul, and declared that he had never been implicated in any plot of that nature.

On learning his sentence, he demanded to speak with the First Consul; but an interview, which would perhaps have prevented a crime, was refused to him.

During the rest of the week marked by this fatal catastrophe, Bonaparte remained at Malmaison alone with his wife, an officer of the Guard, a Prefect of the Palace, and a Lady-in-Waiting. No other person had dined with him, and Madame Bonaparte was forbidden to receive any other lady.

It was said at the time that she had urgently interceded with her husband to obtain the life of the Duc d'Enghien, but that all her entreaties had failed to shake his determination. But, although her well-known kindness of heart places it beyond a doubt that she would have made every effort to save the Prince, had she known of his impending fate, it is difficult to believe that she had an opportunity of doing so. How, indeed, could she have made the attempt, however natural it would have been, in the

short time that elapsed between the sentence and the execution? *

Fouché had at first been named among the dangerous advisers whose counsels had been followed by Bonaparte; but, in addition to its being very unlikely that the First Consul asked the advice of any one, a rumour prevailed that Fouché had been opposed to the death of the Duc d'Enghien, and he was said to have made use of the expression, which has since then become famous: "It is more than a crime, it is a blunder." Talleyrand was said to have been in favour of the death-sentence, and to have gone too far for retreat. But I cannot speak with certainty on this point. Joseph Bonaparte, the only person who could have enlightened me, either did not know the facts, or did not choose to confide them to me.

Several papers had been seized at Ettenheim; among them was a list of persons in France on whom the Prince might have relied. This list was said to contain the names of certain Councillors of State, such as Barbé-Marbois, Siméon, Portalis and others. It has been proved by subsequent events that these imputations were not unfounded; it is therefore all the more remarkable that no injury re-

* The sentence had been pronounced at Vincennes between two and three in the morning, and at four o'clock it was executed. See note by the translators in the Appendix.

sulted from them to the persons involved. They continued to enjoy Bonaparte's favour and to serve him so long as his power lasted. These reports, however, whether true or false, had spread general alarm; the most absurd rumours were circulated. A Bourbon Prince was, it was said, concealed in the house of the Austrian Minister, who had given him an asylum; Duroc had gone to Vienna to negotiate for permission to search the ambassador's house, &c. In short, general alarm prevailed, and, as the Government had restricted itself to publishing an account of the court-martial at Vincennes in the '*Moniteur*' of the 1st Germinal without adding any explanation, that alarm was increased by all that Parisian credulity chose to add to the reality.

The First Consul emerged at last from his retirement. He appeared at the Council of State on the 3rd Germinal, and delivered the following speech, which I consigned to writing on the same day :—

"I can scarcely conceive that in so enlightened a city as Paris, in the capital of a great empire, such ridiculous rumours can be credited as those which have been circulating for the last few days. How can any one believe that a Bourbon Prince is here, that he is hiding at the German Ambassador's house, and that I have not dared to have him arrested! People who believe this must know me very little;

and must have a poor idea of the policy that should guide the Government. If the Duc de Berry, if any Bourbon were in hiding at the house of M. de Cobentzel,* I should not only have had him seized, but shot on the same day, and M. de Cobentzel with him. If the Archduke Charles were in Paris, and he had afforded an asylum to one of those Princes, I should have done the very same thing; he should have been shot. We live no longer in the time of sanctuary. We are not obliged, as were the Athenians,† to respect the temple of Minerva, which had to be unroofed so that a general who had fled thither might be seized because the people dared not take him within the precinct. Europe and the nations are ruled by other ideas at the present day. To suppose that I have despatched Duroc (who has not left Paris) to the Emperor to obtain permission to search the house of his ambassador, when one of our greatest enemies is supposed to be in hiding there, is to degrade France to the level of the pettiest republics of Europe, to that of Genoa or of Venice; and yet even the latter ordered the arrest of the Marquis de Bedmar.‡ Such rumours, such suspicions

* Count Philip von Cobentzel was at that time Austrian Ambassador in Paris.

† This quotation is incorrect. The circumstance occurred at Sparta with regard to Pausanias, who had taken refuge in the temple of the Minerva of Chalcis.

‡ There is an error here also. The Marquis de Bedmar was

as these are derogatory to me, and also to the ambassador of whom I have no reason to complain. I have therefore thought it right to make the Council of State acquainted with the whole truth, so that the men who compose it may rectify public opinion and direct it towards more reasonable conclusions."

"I have, moreover," continued the First Consul, after a short interval, "caused the Senate to be informed of the particulars of the correspondence organised by Drake; * they also shall be laid before the Council, which will be enabled to judge of the

not arrested by the Venetian Senate; but his house was searched, and he made loud complaints on the subject. He appeared before the Senate to defend himself in person against the accusation in question. The Senate could only protect him from the fury of the people by sending him under escort to the place of embarkation.

These errors are of no real importance, and do not detract from the rude eloquence of this remarkable speech.

* Drake, an envoy from England to Munich, where he was residing in 1803 and 1804, gained celebrity as a spy, and by the intrigues which he carried on during his various missions. Papers relating to a correspondence he had organised in the interior of France were laid before the Senate. They were also sent to all the members of the Diplomatic Body in Paris, who replied, in the name of their respective Courts, by assurances of absolute adhesion to the First Consul. These replies may be seen in the 'Moniteur' of the 7th Germinal, year XII.; they vie with each other in adulation. See also the 'Moniteur' of the 4th Germinal, in which these documents are published, also a pamphlet, by Méhée, which appeared at this time with the title of 'Alliance des Jacobins avec le ministère Anglais.'

principles by which the English Ministers are guided, and whether we owe much consideration to those, who under the cloak of diplomacy organise assassination and atrocious crimes. We shall see what is due to a family whose members have become the base tools of England. Let not France deceive herself! For her there will be neither peace nor quiet until the last Bourbon shall have been exterminated. I had one of them seized at Ettenheim. On my first request, the Margrave consented to my seizing him, and how, indeed, should the law of nations be claimed by those who have planned an assassination, who give orders for it, and pay for it? By such a deed alone they put themselves beyond the pale of European nations.* And then people talk to me of the right of sanctuary, of violation of territory! What utter nonsense! They know me very little. My veins run with blood, not water.

“However, I am bound to state, that in this city of Paris those men found neither shelter nor partisans. None of the returned or amnestied *émigrés* are implicated. Hitherto, I protest I have had no reason to complain of them. Perhaps in their hearts they may have desired a change, but it belongs to God alone to look into the conscience;

* This is the dangerous maxim laid down in Talleyrand's letter to the Margrave of Baden.

I can only judge of actions.* Therefore I am far from changing the maxims of Government, far from condemning a number of people in a mass. I shall seize and I shall strike guilty individuals, but I shall take no wholesale measures. I repeat it, the maxims of the Government shall not be changed.

“ I ordered the prompt trial and execution of the Duc d’Enghien, so that the returned *émigrés* might not be led into temptation. I feared that the long delays of a trial, the solemnity of condemnation, might revive sentiments that they could not have refrained from exhibiting ; and that I might have been obliged to hand them over to the police, thus extending instead of narrowing the circle of the guilty.†

“The Duke was, moreover, tried by a court-martial, to which he was amenable ; he had borne arms against France, he had made war on us. By his death, he has repaid a part of the blood of two millions of French citizens who perished in that war. It will be seen by the papers we have seized that he had established himself at Ettenheim so as to carry on a correspondence with the interior of France. I arrested him in the Margravate of Baden. Who knows whether I might not also have seized the

* Such a principle cannot be too much praised in the head of a Government.

† He had said to Truguet, two days before, “ Well, there is one Bourbon the less ! I wished to spare him the terror of death by having him shot at once.”

other Bourbons who are living at Warsaw? Do people suppose that they live there without my knowledge? On the contrary, they live there entirely because of my consent. Paul,* who was a man of logical mind, after making peace with me, himself proposed to banish the Bourbons from his states. Austria would shelter none of them, and I shall not make peace with England until she consents to the total expulsion of the Bourbons and the *émigrés*.

“But, as it was necessary to allow them to live somewhere, Warsaw was named, and I consented to this. I went even farther; on the proposition of the King of Prussia, and in order to withdraw the remaining members of the family from the influence of England, I was resolved on making them a suitable allowance, and I believe that in so doing the Republic would have made a political sacrifice favourable to its tranquillity. I am aware of the ridiculous rumours to which this negotiation has given rise; it was said that I had exacted from those Princes a renunciation of the Throne,† and that their refusal to comply with that condition had caused the whole negotiation to fail. There is not a

* The Emperor of Russia, who was assassinated in March 1801. He had, in truth, conceived a passionate attachment to Bonaparte.

† This alludes to his letter to Louis XVIII.

particle of truth in this absurd story ; the facts are those I have just laid before you."

The First Consul paused after the above words ; he then transacted some business of little importance and broke up the sitting at an early hour.

On the following day, Sunday, the 4th Germinal (March 25), he held a reception at the Tuileries, at which the various authorities, generals and other persons of distinction hastened to present themselves. He conversed with everybody, repeated in part what he had said to the Council of State, used the same arguments, and seemed on the whole to be seeking for general approbation. A deputation from the Legislative Body, which had risen on the previous day, was also received by him, and President Fontanes, who was spokesman, delivered an emphatic panegyric of the First Consul, but did not in any way allude to the terrible event that was in the thoughts of all. The words "Republic" and "Bourbons" did not even occur in his speech.

Meanwhile the gates of Paris remained closed, and the prosecution of all those who had taken part in the conspiracy was carried on. Two of the Polignacs, M. de Rivière, and several others, had been arrested.

Amid all these scenes of terror and alarm, M. de Talleyrand found means to distinguish himself by a piece of egregious flattery. On the 3rd Germinal,

